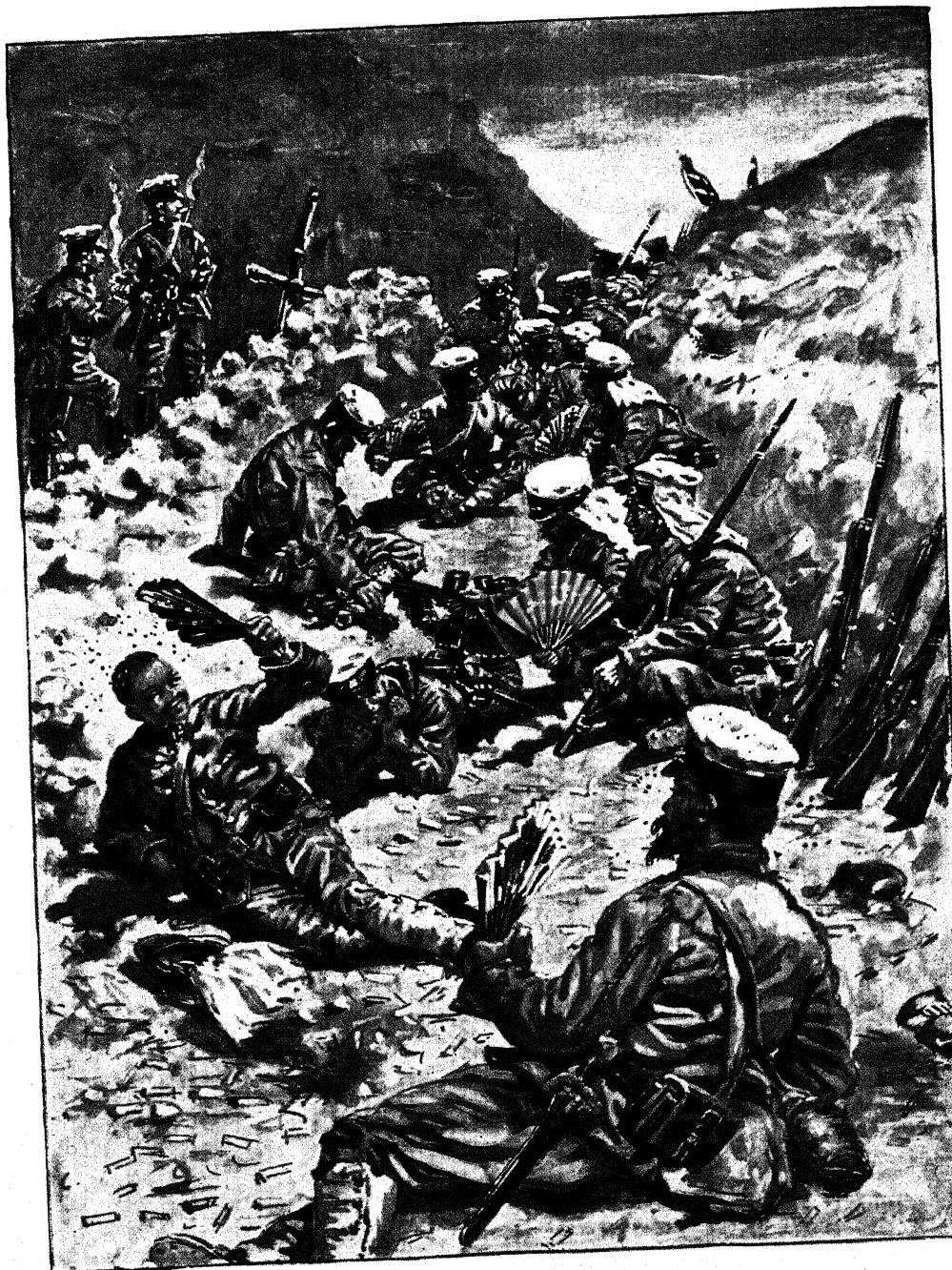


CASELL'S HISTORY OF  
THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR





THE FAN IN THE FIELD: JAPANESE SOLDIERS FANNING THEMSELVES  
DURING A LULL

CASSELL'S . . . .  
HISTORY OF THE  
RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

*ILLUSTRATED*

SPECIAL EDITION  
VOLUME III

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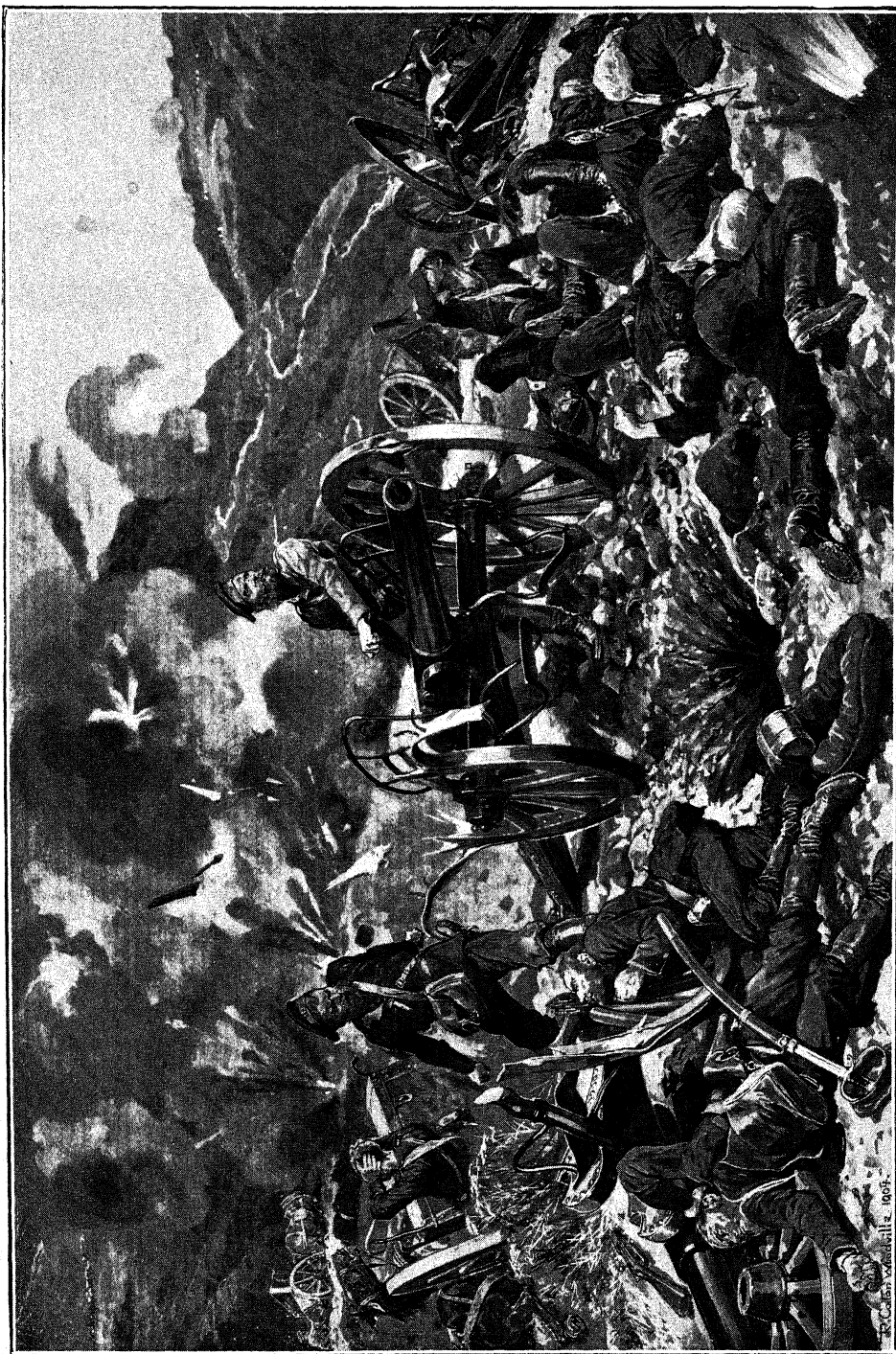
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VOLUME II.







SHELLED FROM THREE POINTS: THE DESTRUCTION OF A RUSSIAN BATTERY BY THE CONCENTRATED FIRE OF THE JAPANESE.





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MAIN STREET, HARBIN.

# THE HISTORY OF THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

INSIDE PORT ARTHUR — A SPIRITED DEFENCE — THE JAPANESE APPROACH — OYAMA IN COMMAND — DIARY OF THE SIEGE — TORPEDO ATTACKS — CAPTURE OF WOLF'S HILL — NAVAL INCIDENTS.

THE morning mist has lifted from the sea, and in the growing light of a summer day Port Arthur and its environs are revealed in clear-cut detail. A contrast, this, with the midnight gloom in which, also at Port Arthur, the first great opening scene of the war was enacted; and the contrast deepens as we examine more closely the appearance of the great Russian fortress after nearly half a year of almost continuous and strongly determined fighting.

The Russian flag is still flying, and flying with a pride that is fully justified by a splendidly stubborn defence. In the harbour Russian warships are still grouped in no inconsiderable strength. Our old friend, the battleship *Tsarevitch*, with several consorts and a fair show

of cruisers, including the trusty *Bayan* and the plucky little *Novik*, are still at their moorings; and there are more than enough destroyers for the purpose of patrolling the restricted area left unguarded by the blockading enemy. But even here the change is marked, indeed, from the aspect at the beginning of February, when Russia fondly believed that at sea as well as on land her weight of metal would give her a supremacy which Japan would hardly dare to question. The ships have been patched up, and are more or less ready for sea, but here and there it is evident that the battering which some have received has left its mark upon speed and fighting efficiency. Nor is the harbour either the post of refuge or the centre of activity which it

has been at a comparatively recent stage of the war itself. Occasionally it suffers from the high-angle fire of the Japanese guns, and the docks and workshops, by reason of the Chinese exodus, are no longer full of the busy hum of men. In place of the former rush of work, and ceaseless clanging of hammers and whirring of lathes, there is little beyond the business of ordinary repairs, and a general air of anxious waiting for the moment when relief from the present suffocating strain can be obtained by vigorous action.

Seldom has a powerful fleet suffered such a period of enforced idleness as that imposed upon the Russian warships at Port Arthur by the wrong-headedness of Russia's naval policy, coupled with Japan's watchful superiority in all that relates to operations at sea. It is surprising, indeed, that any efficiency or morale should remain after the vicissitudes of the past few months, and, though it does remain, and is presently to be demonstrated, there is no question that the Squadron moored in Port Arthur harbour in July is sadly changed from that of which the battleships lay grouped in the outside roadstead on the night of February 8th.

Coming ashore, we find the difference between then and now still more marked. It is a curious characteristic of most great sieges that, after the alarm of the early bombardments, and the realisation of the fact that relief is practically out of the question, a disposition sets in to accept the situation, and to make little of it by resumption of the ordinary modes of life. It is not a matter of bravado so much as of sheer *ennui*. People get tired of thinking about nothing else than their uncomfortable surroundings, and long for some relief from the monotony, even if added

danger be incurred in the process. Accordingly, at Port Arthur this July morning there is still some show of animation in the streets. Captain Bradley, of the *Hipsang*, the British steamer which, as narrated in Chapter XLIII., was torpedoed in Pigeon Bay on July 16th, reports that the general appearance of the town does not at this period indicate a state of siege or, indeed, of any sort of distress. The shops and stores are open, and business is brisk. Captain Bradley expressly mentions that during his detention at Port Arthur, which lasted a fortnight, he was twice allowed to leave his quarters in order to purchase provisions, which were plentiful and moderate in price. He also speaks of seeing ladies and children in the streets, and remarks on the maintenance of communication, presumably by blockade runners and wireless telegraphy, with Chifu and other places. Altogether an impression which goes far to contradict the gloomy reports given by Chinese and other refugees, who declare that Port Arthur has been reduced to very considerable straits, that the supply of fresh meat has been exhausted, and that only the troops are getting salt meat, non-combatants subsisting mainly on oatmeal and rice.

Perhaps the absolute truth lies somewhere between Captain Bradley's favourable description and the highly-coloured account given by men possibly not unwilling to exaggerate a little in order to procure some added sympathy. It must be remembered that, in the case of a close investment, it is almost invariably sought by the besieged to give outsiders the idea that, practically speaking, no inconvenience is being suffered, and that provisions, in particular, are plentiful. It may be that no special precaution was

taken in this respect with Captain Bradley; but it is equally possible that the authorities, in view of his release, made a special effort to convince him that Port Arthur was in a good way as regards necessities of life, and that the inhabitants regarded with comparative in-

oldest ruses of war, this of attempting to convey indirectly to the outside world the notion that a siege is being rather enjoyed than otherwise; and without, of course, any thought of disparaging Captain Bradley's evidence, there is no harm in supposing that he was to some extent



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ARRIVAL OF RUSSIAN CAVALRY AT PORT ARTHUR BEFORE ITS INVESTMENT.

difference the circumstance that they were literally encompassed by a strong and skilful enemy. In fact, it is recorded that when the master of the *Hipsang* was examined by the captain of the *Retvisan* the latter roundly asserted that Port Arthur was provisioned for three years. Similarly, when Captain Bradley was permitted to purchase provisions, it is not improbable that he was allowed to buy them at a low price. It is one of the

purposely misled as to the real state of affairs inside the fortress.

On the other hand, there is even greater cause to mistrust the reports of the refugees, some of which are proved in other directions to have been quite baseless. It is quite possible that "useless mouths" at Port Arthur during the later developments of the siege were not often filled with substantial food, but that is the ordinary fate of civilians who persist

in remaining in a beleaguered town, usually in hope of making some inordinate profit, when they have been given a strong hint to get away. But whatever may have been the unsatisfied longings of the non-combatant population, there is no reason to suppose that the troops at Port Arthur during July were suffering from any lack of provisions, or from any other kindred hardship except, it seems, the loss of *vodka* and tobacco. In these, it appears from a private letter from an officer of the garrison to a friend in Mukden, which was smuggled out of the fortress by a Chinaman, there is a veritable famine. In the letter in question, the genuineness of which is vouched for by the *Daily Express* Correspondent at Chifu, "an impassioned appeal" is made to the Mukden friend to get Chinamen, at any cost, to run the blockade with cigarettes concealed on their persons, and it is declared that the lack of anything to smoke is the chief cause of the depression among the gallant defenders of Port Arthur.

It is not likely that in the imaginary visit we are paying to Port Arthur we should notice such a detail as this, but there are other matters connected with the position of the besieged which would not fail to catch the eye. First, we could not but notice many traces of the repeated bombardments to which the town, as well as the forts and harbour, has been subjected. Captain Bradley speaks of the town as being "uninjured by the bombardment;" but here again it is natural to suppose that care was taken to disguise from him the more serious ravages caused by the constant arrival of big shells charged with one of the most powerful explosives known. It is mentioned in the above-quoted letter, which was written before the great attack on

Port Arthur was commenced, that even then the Japanese shell-fire was causing daily losses among the troops; and before a shell causes the death of a single soldier it may well happen that half-a-dozen buildings are wrecked.

But it is not in Port Arthur town that the main interest of the siege is centred, but in the defensive works, the men behind the guns, and the officers who direct the latter. It is possible that on board the ships in the harbour we may have caught a glimpse of Admiral Vitoft—whose name in earlier despatches, by an error of transliteration, is usually given as "Witgert"—and Grigorovitch, and now on shore we are very likely to encounter General Stoessel on his daily round of the defences. The gallant commandant is, perhaps, preparing, as he goes along, one of those spirited speeches which he constantly delivers to the men, telling them that the eyes of the Tsar and of all Russia are upon them, that they must help him to hold out to the last, and that Kuropatkin is only biding his time to sweep the Liaotung Peninsula clear of the Japanese, and thus bring the temporary isolation of Port Arthur to a great and glorious conclusion. At heart, one fears, poor General Stoessel is not so confident. That he will hold out to the last, like the good fighting soldier he is, need not be doubted; but he has probably little doubt as to the inevitable result of the siege, for it appears that he is about to send away Madame Stoessel, who has thus far devotedly stayed by his side; and in a letter written not long after this period he is said to have used the pathetic words, "Good-bye, good-bye, for Port Arthur will be my tomb!"

But of such sad foreboding there is no reflection, we may be sure, in the

General's proud demeanour, nor in that of his subordinates. For there is ample evidence that throughout this period the discipline and morale both of the troops and the fleet are excellent. Captain Bradley particularly notices the smartness and good spirits exhibited by the officers; and where these preserve their indifference to an ugly and uncomfortable environment we may be sure the Russian rank and file are up to the mark. Yet it must need all their fortitude to maintain a bold front with the clear knowledge that day by day the enemy's grip is tightening, and that as yet no solitary gleam of hope beyond the Commandant's assurances has brightened the monotony of constant fighting and repeated losses. The health of the troops is declared to be excellent; but there must be hundreds in hospital suffering from wounds, and for a garrison now reduced, it is expertly estimated, to about 22,000 men, the wear and tear of duty in the trenches alone must be very exhausting. For attacks by night are frequently delivered by the Japanese, not, in all probability, with any idea of creating any deep impression, but merely to prevent the garrison from getting rest.

For the rest, it would seem that for the defenders of Port Arthur during July the main interest lies in the fact that, even before the final series of attacks is delivered, the altered character of the siege is becoming daily more apparent. No longer is the sea the quarter from which danger is to be chiefly apprehended. There are attacks occasionally carried out by venturesome Japanese torpedo craft against the Russian guardships, and mines continue to be sown; but the era of alarm caused by continual attempts to block the harbour by sunken merchantmen seems to have passed. Considerable liberty of movement is

allowed to the Russian ships, for we hear of opportunities seized by the brisk little *Novik* to dash out and bombard the enemy's positions on the narrowing semi-circle which shuts in Port Arthur by land. But the brunt of the present fighting has to be borne by the troops, and for these there is practically no respite. Day in and day out, and at all hours, not only must the gun-teams be on the alert, but the infantry must be prepared to resist a violent inrush, and, if they are compelled to give way, they must lose no time in girding themselves for a desperate effort to regain some useful position they have lost. We shall never, in all probability, have any circumstantial and coherent account of the manner in which the Russian troops in Port Arthur fought out the long weary days and short, sharp nights of July in one almost continuous struggle against the gradually advancing forces of the Japanese. But there is no doubt that the record in question, were it available, would be one of unflinching heroism, of steady reluctance to fall back, of passionate devotion to duty, and of calm loyalty to the old watchword, "Mighty Russia and the Tsar!"

And now let us endeavour to construct, from the scanty materials available, at least an outline narrative of these initial weeks of siege, taking a few known facts as our starting point, and discarding many of the doubtful rumours which, under the appropriate designation of "Chifooleries," are forthcoming in rank abundance at this period. The task is no easy one, for the reticence of the Japanese authorities reaches its culminating point in respect of the earlier operations around Port Arthur, and for nearly six weeks since the occupation of Dalny not one single official report



concerning the doings of the besieging army is sent out from Tokio. Indeed, so rigorous is the censorship that an English journal published at Yokohama, which issued the news of the fighting on June 26th, to which allusion was made in Chapter XXXVI., was promptly cited before a law court and fined. Subsequently a special veto was placed upon the appearance in any paper produced in, or any telegram sent from Japan, of any sort of news likely to throw light on the siege operations at Port Arthur. From time to time there are messages from General Stoessel, and here and there the statements of the refugees bear signs of being remotely trustworthy. But, as the Tokio correspondent of the *Times*, writing on July 10th, remarks, it is scarcely too much to say that at no period of the war have military affairs been shrouded in greater secrecy than at this. Nor is the obscurity likely to be much lightened in regard to the earlier stages of the siege, in which the fighting was mostly desultory, and fortune seems to have favoured both sides pretty equally.

A brief reference has already been made in Chapter XXXVI. to the fighting of June 26th and July 4th, in the course of which the Japanese succeeded, first in occupying a line of eminences confronting the fortress on the east, and afterwards in capturing the Miaotsui Fort (page 440). These operations fell to the share of the column advancing from Dalny by way of the Siao-ping-tao Promontory, which lies only about fourteen miles from the eastern face of the Port Arthur fortifications. Simultaneously, as before mentioned, there is another column following the central road from Kin-chau, and working its way toward Shui-shi-ying, or "Naval Camp," which is plainly marked on the plan on page

437. About half a mile south of the village of Shui-shi-ying is an eminence about 200 feet high, and surmounted by a temple which is known as Wolf's Hill, and which must not be confounded with the White Wolf Mountain to the southwest of the Tiger's Tail. Of a very determined struggle which took place at this point something will be said presently. In the meantime, mention is merely made of the locality in order to indicate the converging nature of the Japanese attack.

As another interesting piece of preliminary information, it should now be stated that Field-Marshal Count Oyama, who, as noted at the close of Chapter XXXIV., left Tokio on July 6th to assume his active duties as Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese armies in the field, has elected to make the siege operations at Port Arthur his earliest care. He is accompanied by General Baron Kodama as his Chief of the Staff, and by Major-Generals Fukushima and Inokuchi. It is not difficult to imagine the joyful satisfaction with which the veteran captor of Port Arthur in 1894 is received at Dalny, where there is already a notable revival even of commercial activity. To Marshal Oyama himself the landing must indeed be pregnant with reflections, with memories of the vigorous operations he directed aforesaid with such prompt success, with grave anticipations of much greater difficulties now to be surmounted. There is something historically most remarkable in this instance of a military commander being called upon a second time within a decade to take charge of the siege of a mighty fortress. To an emotional people such a repetition might seem to carry with it the best of omens for a fresh success. But to a singularly level-headed thinker like Oyama it will



BEFORE PORT ARTHUR A SECOND TIME: MARSHAL OYAMA, COMMANDER OF THE  
JAPANESE FIELD FORCES.

*Ten years ago Marshal Oyama directed the operations which led to the capture of Port Arthur. He has now taken the field in person with a view to repeating his former success.*



probably have seemed that the very successfulness of his first endeavour was a bad preparation for the strongly enhanced obstacles that beset his present enterprise. For it is no disparagement to his victorious entry of Port Arthur in 1894 to say that between the rushing of the fortress then and its present investment there is almost as much difference as there was between the Mahdi's long siege of Khartoum in 1884-5 and Kitchen-er's swift capture of Omdurman in 1898.

After the fighting on July 4th there appears to have been a slight lull; but accounts from two distinct sources agree that there was a brisk renewal of hostilities two or three days later, in which the Russians claim to have recaptured an advanced hill commanding the Lung-wang-tang Pass. On July 9th another suspension takes place, during which the Japanese intrench themselves in such positions as they have secured. The Russians press them with rifle fire, and the work is further impeded by heavy falls of rain.

On July 10th the Russian cruisers *Bayan*, *Diana*, *Pallada*, and *Novik*, with two gunboats and seven destroyers, emerge from the harbour, preceded by many mine-clearing dredgers. In the afternoon they are nearing the entrance to the Lung-wang River when they are met and attacked by a Japanese flotilla, which exchanges fire with the *Bayan*, and is so persistent in its attentions that the Russian ships retreat into the harbour. The same night a spirited attack with torpedo-boats is carried out by the Japanese, but with no results. According to the Port Arthur journal, the *Novy Krai*, the attack was delivered by twenty torpedo-boats covered by six cruisers and five gunboats. The Russians were on the alert, and the Japanese were repulsed

without, however, sustaining apparent loss. It is reminiscent of former Japanese naval exploits that later in the night a single torpedo-boat should have made for the harbour entrance at full speed, after the manner of the *Asagiri* and *Hayatori* on the night of February 13th. But on this occasion the plucky little adventuress, whoever she is, is met by a hail of shells, and is compelled to withdraw without having effected her purpose.

Mention of the *Hayatori* brings us to a clever capture made about this time by that smart destroyer, which succeeds in waylaying a junk carrying a bag of letters from Port Arthur to Chifu. The haul is a useful one, for among the letters are some conveying valuable information regarding the naval and military conditions at Port Arthur. It is pleasant to be able to add that, with scrupulous courtesy, the Japanese forward all letters not dealing with warlike topics to St. Petersburg, with the request that they may be duly delivered thence to the addressees.

The attack by the torpedo craft on July 10th may possibly have been intended to keep the Russians pleasantly occupied pending the reception of the touring vessel *Manchu Maru*, with the Navy Department's guests on board, by Admiral Togo. This function appears to have taken place on July 14th at the "secret naval base" of the Japanese Fleet in the Elliot Group, three or four hours' steaming from Port Arthur. Admiral Togo would naturally prefer not to be interrupted on such an interesting occasion by being compelled to hover round Port Arthur with his larger ships, and so may have devised the torpedo attack as a means of deterring the Russians from venturing outside the harbour for some few days. Be this as it may, there is no further sortie for the

present; and Admiral Togo is able to show his guests a very imposing spectacle in the shape of five battleships and nine cruisers, with gunboats and torpedo-craft, all grey and powder-stained, but presenting a magnificent panorama of fighting power and readiness.

It is utterly impossible to follow the land operations in detail during the next fortnight; but some credence may be given to the report that on July 12th a considerable Japanese force succeeded in effecting a temporary lodgment in a fort only four or five miles east of Port Arthur, but was surrounded and practically annihilated by the Russians before reinforcements could come up. It is said that on this occasion the Russian land mines were exploded with particularly deadly effect.

On July 16th occurs the episode of the sinking of the *Hipsang*, to which allusion was made in Chapter XLIII. From further details now available, it would seem that the Russian account of this incident is altogether misleading, for the vessel, having apparently been mistaken for a Japanese transport, is torpedoed and sunk in an outrageously off-hand fashion, for which in due course an indemnity will be demanded.

According to Chinese accounts, which fit in rather better than usual with the probabilities of the situation, there was heavy fighting round Lung-wang-tang on July 17th and 18th. The Russian wounded brought in by carts and rick-shaws were estimated at 400, and there is no question that throughout July the fighting on this eastern face of the Port Arthur defences must have been extraordinarily severe and deadly.

On July 24th the destroyer *Lieutenant Burukoff*, which has recently run the blockade and made a daring journey to

and from Niu-chwang (by a misreading of the earlier despatches this vessel, on page 429, was stated to have been commanded by Lieutenant Burukoff), comes to grief in a fog. In company with two other destroyers she falls foul of two Japanese gunboats and some torpedo-boats, and is torpedoed and sunk, her companions being variously reported as cripples and total losses.

Hitherto, most of the land fighting round Port Arthur has been done by the column operating from Dalny, but on July 25th the column advancing along the Kin-chau road on Shui-shi-ying begins to come into very active prominence. On the afternoon of that day the Japanese artillery opens fire, and the Russians, evidently noticing an increase in the weight of metal employed, sleep that night on their arms in the trenches, which are said to occupy a line nearly fifteen miles long. At six o'clock in the morning of the 26th the Japanese again open fire, and continue all day bombarding the whole length of the Russian line. "The Japanese aim," says the *Novy Krai*, "was more accurate than before, showing the benefit of the previous day's practice. Their heaviest fire was directed against the batteries, which included the 12-in. naval guns, commanded by Prince Tscheodse and Captain Skrydloff. A perfect shower of shells struck the earth-works or went screeching overhead into the valley behind the batteries, causing considerable havoc among the artillery-men."

According to some accounts, the Japanese made one or more attacks on Wolf Hill—the position of which has already been described—in the course of the 26th, but were heavily repulsed, and spent the night lying on the slopes leading up to the temple-crowned eminence.

July 27th is a day of terrific struggle. That particularly severe fighting is anticipated by the Japanese is evidenced by the fact that Marshal Oyama leaves Dalny, and moves out to the zone encircling Port Arthur in order to superintend the operations in person.

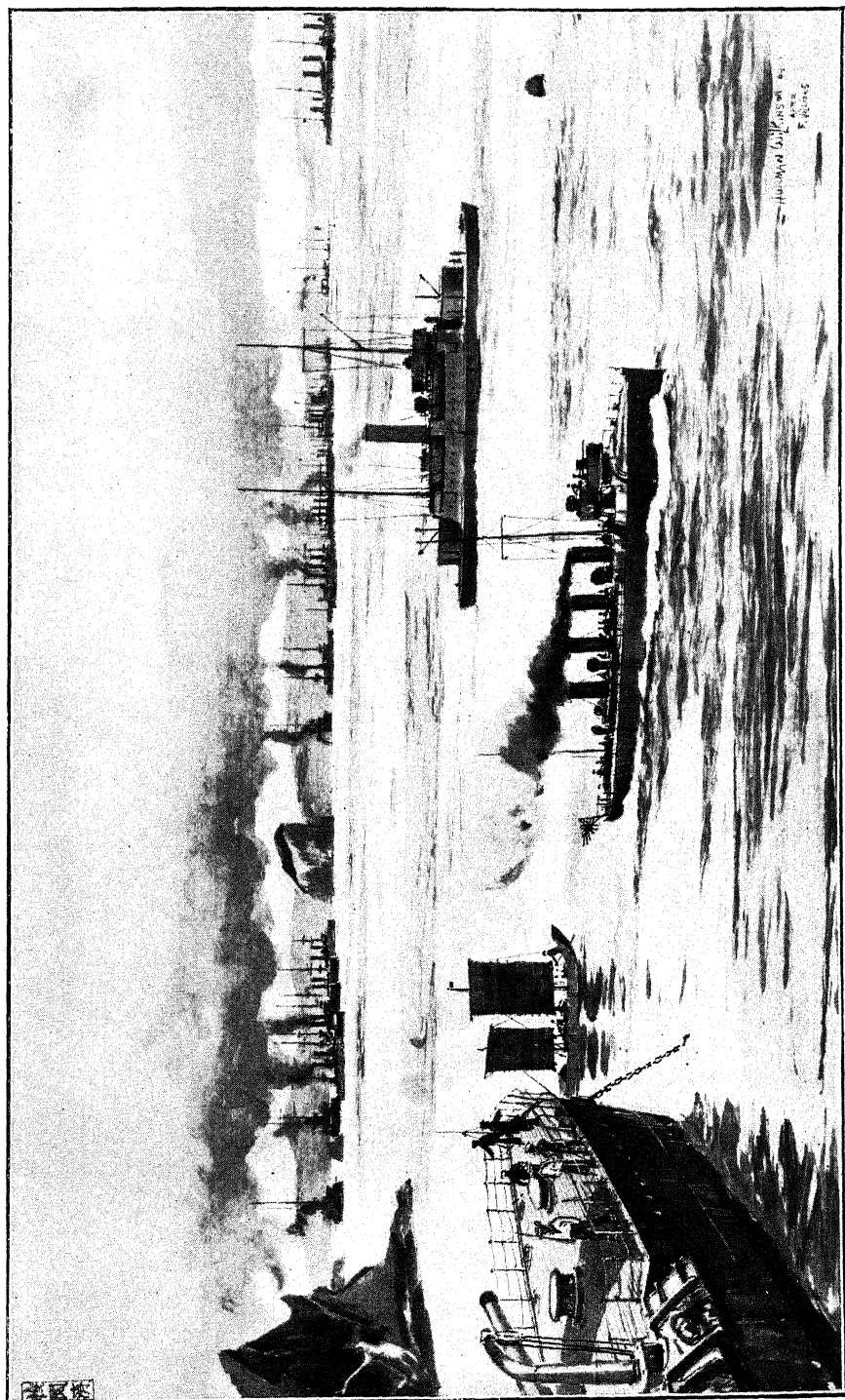
At daybreak a terrific cannonade is directed more especially against the Russian right wing, of which General Kondratchenko is in command, the naval battery again bearing the brunt of the fire. A hail of shrapnel is also thrown into the valley behind the Russian batteries, evidently under the impression that the Russian reserves are collected there. The Russian artillery appears to have been silenced, but the defending infantry and a number of quick-firers lay concealed in the trenches, well-protected, and suffered little loss.

At about nine o'clock the Japanese advance to the attack, and there is reason to believe that some of the hottest fighting of the whole war takes place at this juncture. The struggle is hot in more senses than one, for the sun is scorching, and in an atmosphere thickened by such tremendous discharges of artillery and musketry, and by the constant bursting of shells, the work on both sides must have been terribly exhausting. But neither attackers nor defenders take much heed of such trifles. In a dark wave the Japanese surge up the slopes, and are met by a fire so tremendous that it is described as resembling "a thousand volleys in one simultaneous explosion." As far as can be gathered, the whole Japanese force round Port Arthur must have taken part, directly or indirectly, in this assault; for there is evidence to show that the Russian right was heavily engaged, as well as the real objective, Wolf's Hill. But the attack in this quar-

ter does not seem to have been pressed home. When the Japanese advance ceased, says the *Novy Krai*, "the Russians cheered; but at this moment the news arrived from General Stoessel that the terrific pounding of the right flank had been a mask covering the concentration of the Japanese to attack the left flank, of which Wolf's Hill was the key. General Stoessel commanded the presence of General Kondratchenko, who, with his staff, mounted and rode off immediately. After a brief ride the General was compelled to choose between two roads, a long one safe from fire, and a short cut through a shell-swept valley. 'May God favour the brave,' he said, and galloped through the valley in safety."

Meanwhile, the attack on Wolf's Hill is developed, and as the Japanese advance towards the eminence, the concealed machine guns and riflemen open fire, and the slopes are strewn with slain. Still the gallant Japanese struggle on, and, according to one account, they actually succeed in carrying the position, but are driven out by a strong force of Russian reserves which has been held in readiness for this purpose. Very reluctantly, we may be sure, do the gallant Japanese fall back from the ground they have temporarily won at such fearful cost, leaving General Stoessel at the close of the 27th in occupation of the advanced positions he has so brilliantly held against an enemy of greatly superior strength. Indeed, it is said that in these two last days the Japanese have showed that they have at their disposal some 70,000 men.

The infantry attack, at any rate on Wolf's Hill, does not appear to have been renewed on the 28th and 29th, doubtless for the reason that the Japanese



THE SECRET NAVAL BASE FOR THE JAPANESE ATTACKS UPON PORT ARTHUR.

Hitherto the Japanese naval base has been designated, in official and Press despatches, as "a certain place." The base is now known to have been one of the many natural havens in the Elliot Group. Here, between the islets of Da-ch-san and Khas, only about three hours' steam from Port Arthur, the Japanese ships have been re-coated, re-victualled, and repaired.

were not a little shaken by the repulses of the 26th and 27th. But the cannonading continued, and on the 28th the Japanese artillery succeeded in making a useful breach in the Russian shelter trenches.

At four o'clock in the morning of July 30th the Japanese, strongly reinforced—it is said that the attackers on this occasion numbered 60,000—deliver their final assault on the Wolf's Hill position. To all intents and purposes it is a night attack, but there is no question of a surprise. The Russians are very much on the alert, and when, after creeping up under cover of the darkness to within fifty yards of the summit of the hill, the Japanese rush forward in three columns, they are met with the bayonet, and a hand-to-hand combat ensues in which the Russians appear for a time to hold their own with brilliant success. Wolf's Hill itself is defended by the 13th Regiment, which repeatedly drives back the enemy, but is forced from its position by sheer weight of numbers. The 14th Regiment, however, rushes up and dislodges with the bayonet the Japanese, who have begun to raise cheers of victory. The tide of battle now ebbs and flows till the slopes are covered with dead and dying, and literally stream with blood. For this is ghastly butcher's work which is being done in the dim light of the breaking day. It is not as it is in the ordinary attack when, as the thin line or denser column rushes forward, the crackle of musketry breaks out from the defenders' trenches, and men stagger, throw up their arms, and fall back, or stumble forward on their faces, cleanly hit by bullets which often leave no easily perceptible mark. Very different are the results of the grim bayonet play on the slopes of Wolf's Hill this July morning.

Both sides are in deadly earnest, and both are masters of the weapon which in good hands can deal destruction more surely, if not more swiftly, than either lance or sword. For the latter, wielded by mounted men, may be robbed of half its effect by a horse's sudden swerve, and in the storm and stress of a cavalry charge comparatively few of the cuts and points delivered are likely to prove fatal. But in hand-to-hand fighting with the bayonet there is no promiscuous slashing and thrusting, and then galloping on to slash and thrust again. The infantry soldier at close grips with the enemy sees before him for a moment but a single figure, bent like himself on killing; and the combat, if not to the death, must be, at any rate, to a temporary finish. A thrust, well guarded perhaps; a counter-thrust, which maybe only rips a sleeve or pricks a thigh; a spring to one side to catch the adversary at a disadvantage; a side left unexposed; a strong lunge forward with the whole weight of the body in the rifle; and, as the cruel point penetrates, the stricken one collapses in an ugly heap, his life-blood welling out long before "first aid" can reach him. It is gory, unlovely work, this bayonet fighting, and yet there is something more human, less uncanny, in it than the destruction of enemies out of sight by long range fire; and in the majority of cases the killing and wounding process is, perhaps, more merciful in the case of the bayonet than in that of the bursting shell.

But it is not all cold steel that comes into murderous operation at Wolf's Hill. The Russians have protected their position with mines, and one of these is said to have wiped out five hundred Japanese. "It was an awful sight, and can only be described as a volcano of stones and

dismembered bodies. The sky was lit up with a purple glare, and the mud walls of the Chinese villages were thrown down by the shock." Of all forms of obstacle a mine is the one which most demoralises the stoutest-hearted infantry, and this is so well understood that a familiar *ruse de guerre* is to surround a position with the little flags used to denote the presence of mines, in the hope of cheaply inspiring a numerous enemy with a wholesome dread of the "real thing." Even when mines have exploded prematurely or ineffectively, it is sometimes difficult to get men to continue the advance. It is then no ordinary tribute to the tenacity of the Japanese soldier, and the grip which the Japanese officer has of him, that, after seeing half a battalion swept suddenly away by the explosion of one of these dreadful engines, the attack should still have been pressed with unabated fury, until at last the Russians are utterly overpowered, and the coveted summit of Wolf's Hill is won.

As far as can be gathered from the information available, the Japanese right worked round to the enemy's left rear, and the pressure so exercised forced the Russians to the eastward, thus enabling the Japanese to advance and complete their occupation of these outworks. The Russians are stated to have retired in good order, covered by their artillery, having, in truth, fought an excellent fight that for many a long year will take high rank as a magnificently dogged defence against odds which, taking not only the numbers, but also the fanatical determination of the enemy into account, can only be classed as overwhelming.

The "butcher's bill" on this momentous occasion is altogether obscure. During July 26th, 27th, and 28th, General Stoessel admits that he lost about 1,500

men and 40 officers killed and wounded; but of the fighting on July 30th he merely remarks that "our losses are not great." The Japanese are still more reticent. On the evening of July 30th the General Staff at Tokio breaks the silence it has hitherto observed with respect to Port Arthur, by stating that in the fighting since the 26th five officers have been killed, and forty-one wounded, but no mention is made of the losses in men.

In the trenches on Wolf's Hill the Japanese captured two Maxims and a Nordenfeldt. The last bore the mark of the Kure arsenal, and was evidently a gun taken from one of the Japanese merchantmen sunk in the attempt to seal Port Arthur.

Let us now examine a little more closely the nature of the success which Japan has won at a cost which, if not so terrific as the Russians would have us believe, must still have been greater than any as yet suffered by the attack in any one operation of the war. The real importance of Wolf's Hill has not primarily to do with the military measures against Port Arthur. The hill lies about a mile outside the perimeter of the Port Arthur defences, and is not of serious value for the purpose of shattering the latter, because in front of it, and within the main line of the Russian defences, there are two greater elevations, Obelisk Hill and Poya-shan, which block to a considerable extent the line of fire. But between these two hills there is a gap less than half a mile wide, through which direct fire, at some 6,000 yards range, from Wolf's Hill, can reach the usual anchorage of the Port Arthur Fleet, which is near the end of the Tiger's Tail.

The immense importance of Wolf's Hill to the Japanese thus becomes quickly apparent. If they can succeed in planting



RUSSIAN SUBMARINE MINES REMOVED BY THE JAPANESE FROM OUTSIDE PORT ARTHUR.

siege guns on this position they will be able to rain shells upon the ships in the harbour until the latter becomes a veritable inferno, and the Fleet will be simply compelled to take to the open, where Admiral Togo will, of course, be ready to give it an equally warm, if not still warmer, welcome.

The purpose of this chapter is not to carry the land operations round Port Arthur to a later date than the end of July, thus bringing the siege to the chronological level of the other movements belonging to what, for the purpose of this narrative, has been accepted as the second phase of the war. It may, however, be usefully anticipated here that by August 8th the Japanese succeeded in the exceedingly difficult and dangerous task of bringing up siege guns and planting them on Wolf's Hill in the face of the heavy fire from the Russian forts. The results of this fine, and probably costly, performance will be found in a

later chapter, but it may be remarked that they are sufficiently dramatic to invest the preliminary capture and occupation of Wolf's Hill with something more than ordinary interest.

Meanwhile, there are one or two naval episodes of this period which merit record. On July 26th the *Bayan*, *Askold*, *Pallada*, *Novik*, and some gunboats, steamed out of Port Arthur with the intention of bombarding the Japanese positions. They were attacked by the old battleship *Tsin yen*, which Japan took from China in 1894, the cruisers *Chiyoda*, *Itsukushima*, and *Matsushima*, two second-class cruisers, and thirty torpedo-boats. The Russians claim that an 8-in. shell from the *Bayan* burst in the stern of the *Itsukushima*, and that the *Chiyoda* was damaged by a Russian mine. The following day the same Russian cruisers, together with the *Retvisan*, three gunboats, and twelve torpedo-boats, under command of Rear-Admiral Leschinsky,



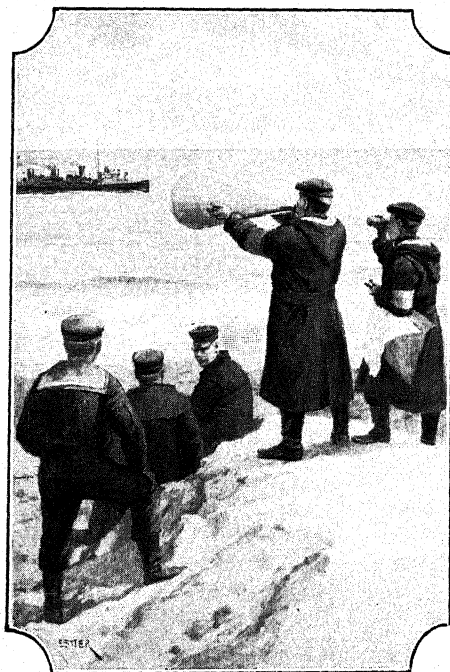
were sent out towards Lung-wang-tung to bombard the enemy's positions, by way of supporting General Stoessel's right.

About this time—the exact date is not specified—an exciting incident occurs near Lung-wang-tung while the Japanese are engaged in sweeping for mines. A Japanese gunboat becomes entangled with a Russian mine, and in trying to free herself she gets caught in the sweeping apparatus and drifts helplessly to Hsien-sheng Point, where she is exposed to a heavy Russian cannonade. Captain Hirose in another gunboat goes to the rescue, and is towing the unfortunate little ship away when a Russian destroyer darts out and attacks the two Japanese gunboats with great spirit. Captain Hirose's vessel is hit twice, he himself and ten others are wounded, three men are killed, and it is only after an hour's hard fighting that the Japanese gunboats succeed in shaking off their troublesome assailant.

Another brisk little engagement takes place on July 5th, which shows that the spirit of the officers who handle the Japanese destroyers is being well maintained. Two Japanese destroyers, the *Oboro* and *Akebono*, are scouting near Port Arthur about 4 p.m., when fourteen

Russian destroyers emerge swiftly from the harbour and split up into three flotillas. One of four destroyers steams south-west, another of seven south, and a third of three steers for Hsien-sheng, evidently with the intention to surround the *Akebono* and *Oboro*. The latter, after exchanging a heavy fire at 5,000 yards, also make for Hsien-sheng, and attack the smallest of the three Russian flotillas, which, however, declines a combat and makes for the harbour. Meanwhile,

another Japanese destroyer, the *Ikad-suchi*, comes up to reinforce, and the three plucky little vessels, instead of retiring quietly in the face of a very superior force, promptly steam south in order to do battle with the remaining eleven Russian ships! These, perhaps, impressed by the audacity of the Japanese, do not seek to make the most of their opportunity, but withdraw into the harbour. No loss appears to have resulted from this affair, but as an ex-



THE MEGAPHONE IN USE BY A JAPANESE SIGNALLING PARTY.

hibition of fine pluck the incident is an inspiring one, and has doubtless by this time taken an honoured place among the many similar achievements which constitute the brilliant, if "short and simple, annals" of the Navy of Japan.



## CHAPTER XLVIII.

A NEW PHASE—CONCERTED MOVEMENTS—THE RUSSIAN BARRIER—KUROKI TAKES THE OFFENSIVE—YU-SHU-LING-TZU AND YANG-TZU-LING—ARTILLERY PERFORMANCES—CAPTURE OF TO-MU-CHAN—OKU'S ADVANCE TO HAI-CHENG—JAPANESE TRANSPORT.

SINCE the capture of Hsihoyen by the "right column" of General Kuroki's Army on July 19th, of which an account was given in Chapter XL., no important movement has been made by the Japanese forces to the east of Liao-yang. Towards the end of July, however, the success of General Oku's Army at Ta-shi-chao, followed by the occupation of Niu-chwang, has brought the Second Army into such close touch with the First and Takushan Armies that a concerted advance becomes practicable. Accordingly, on the last day of July we see an extremely interesting movement of this character commenced, and carried to a temporary conclusion, with singular vivacity and thoroughness, notwithstanding really serious obstacles. The whole operation comprises three separate battles, coupled with several distinct tactical and strategical movements. Any attempt to produce a panoramic description of such widely scattered, although carefully co-ordinated, fighting would be quite hopeless. Attention, therefore, will first be paid to General Kuroki's victories, and here again priority of treatment will be accorded to the more northerly of the two engagements.

It will be remembered that a couple of days before the capture of Hsihoyen the Russians made a series of attacks on the Japanese positions at the Motien-ling and elsewhere, all of which were more or less

heavily repulsed. Notwithstanding the failure of this attempt to beat back the Japanese line, and the subsequent failure to hold the very important Hsihoyen position, the Russians evidently cling to the idea of putting as many obstacles as possible in the way of a further advance in the direction of Liao-yang, and General Count Keller, in spite of his previous mishaps, remains in command of a strong force, the business of which is to act as a barrier between Liao-yang and General Kuroki's Army. General Count Keller himself is occupying the Yang-tzu-ling, a pass six miles to the west of the Motien-ling, with the 3rd and 6th Divisions, a brigade of the 9th Division, and four batteries. Another force, also acting as a barrier, occupies Yu-shu-ling-tzu, four miles to the west of Hsihoyen, the detail being a brigade of the 9th Division, the main part of the 31st and 35th Divisions, and four batteries.

There are thus, at a moderate computation, some 60,000 Russians screening Liao-yang and holding strong advanced positions, each about twenty-five miles distant from General Kuropatkin's headquarters. At daybreak on July 31st the forces under General Kuroki's command commence operations for the attack of these positions, both of which are said to possess great natural advantages in having precipitous ground to the front, while the rugged sides of the mountains

end abruptly in open valleys. According to Mr. McKenzie, the war correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, the Japanese were divided for the two attacks into three columns, of which one and a portion of another attacked Yu-shu-ling-tzu, the remainder being engaged in frontal and turning movements against the Yang-tzu-ling.

On the night of July 30th the advanced guards of all three columns worked hard to repair the roads, so as to make them practicable for artillery. They succeeded as far as the guns were concerned, but it was found impossible to get forward the ammunition waggons. The shells had therefore to be carried by hand, considerable shortage of ammunition during the following day being the natural result.

Taking the Yu-shu-ling-tzu position first, this, it appears, was quite as strong as that at Hsihoyen, and much more strongly held. As the correspondents appear to have been mostly engaged in watching the Yang-tzu-ling fighting, there are only scanty details available of the northerly engagement, but it must have been a very brisk little affair, culminating in a marked Japanese success, notwithstanding the equal, if not superior, strength of the enemy. The attack commenced at 8 o'clock in the morning, and evidently included a bold turning movement, for we hear of heavy losses inflicted upon the right flank of the Russians, who are said to have had about 500 casualties. In the course of the afternoon the Russians raised the Red Cross flag in order to carry away their wounded, the Japanese promptly suspending their fire to allow this duty to be performed. By sunset the Japanese claim to have defeated the enemy, but owing to the large forces opposed to them, and the strength of the positions

occupied, they were unable to capture the latter.

At daybreak the next day the attack is resumed, and by noon the Russians are finally expelled from their positions, and are retreating towards An-ping. General Kuroki says that the Japanese pursued for four miles, and that the enemy "fled," but Reuter's correspondent declares that the Russians fell back in splendid order and in admirable fashion. "Their line in contact with the enemy," he writes from the battlefield, "can be seen for miles, and the conduct of the men is irreproachable."

Reverting to the attack on the Yang-tzu-ling, here again we have an extraordinarily strong position, the centre of which is a fort erected by the Russians above To-wan, the name given to the pagoda at the western entrance to the Motien-ling. No pains have been spared to make the position apparently impregnable to either frontal or flank attack, and a special feature of the defence is the employment of batteries, admirably placed, of the new Russian field-gun, which is a true quick-firer of great range and power, carrying a fifteen pound shell as against the eleven pound shell carried by the Japanese gun. Hitherto, the latter has had it all its own way against the old pattern Russian gun; but now the conditions are to be partly altered, and experts do not hesitate to say that if the Russians can now bring into action a sufficiency of their newer weapons, the Japanese will find themselves placed at a serious disadvantage.

The action commences at 7 a.m., the orders apparently being that the Russian right should be held by the Japanese troops in position at the Motien-ling; while on the Japanese left a triple attempt is to be made to weaken the enemy's

right, to work round to his rear, and to threaten his communications on his left rear with Liao-yang.

During the earlier part of the day the action was merely confined to the artillery, and it is clear from the statements of eye-witnesses that the duel was one of great severity, in which the Japanese worked manfully to make up for the enemy's superiority in weight and range by a skilful use of indirect fire. Although their guns are not quick-firers, in the true sense of the word, the Japanese had by noon fired a thousand shells against the enemy's three infantry and artillery positions. Of the Russian artillery practice, several correspondents speak in terms of warm admiration. In the earliest stages of the fight a Russian battery opened fire upon a Japanese battery at 5,000 yards, found the range immediately, and compelled the Japanese gunners to take cover. Shrapnel appears to have been used throughout by the Russians, but towards the afternoon the Japanese, who, as noted above, were a good deal handicapped by not being able to bring up their ammunition waggons, exhibited a marked preference for common shell.

Coming to the actual attack, it is fortunate that there should be available an eye-witness's account of this engagement, which for clearness, coupled with much picturesqueness of description, could not readily be surpassed. The account in question is that telegraphed on the morrow of the fight by the Special Correspondent of the *Standard*, and from it some deeply interesting extracts may usefully be made. The first relates, as will be seen, to the attempts against the Russian right :—

“ Part of our left wing had been pushed forward during the night, with the object

of getting to the right rear of the enemy. The Russians sought to frustrate this flanking movement by a counter attack, which was repulsed with great loss.

“ Early in the afternoon the order was given to move forward. The command was obeyed with alacrity, though the situation appeared hopeless for the assailants. The enemy occupied a wooded hill, on which their batteries were well screened, and held three tiers of trenches, which, being carefully concealed by branches, it was not easy to locate precisely.

“ Both the day and the deed constituted a tremendous test of endurance. The air pulsated with the burning heat, and the men were exhausted with their labour and the exposure to a pitiless sun. When they reached the foot of the wooded hill many were suffering from sun-stroke and heat apoplexy.

“ Further advance was impossible under such a rain of bullets and hail of shrapnel as swept the slope, yet the Japanese stuck to their position, taking whatever cover the exposed hill-side offered.

“ Before their blistered eyes ran a mountain stream, to reach which they had to cross a fire-swept zone; but thirst overpowers the fear of death, and, as I have seen British soldiers do more than once, many of the Japanese risked their lives for a draught of water.

“ Seeing that the advance was hopeless under such conditions, the order was given to retire, and the men withdrew to shelter behind the hill, there to await developments in the centre.

“ Two regiments suffered heavily, having 300 casualties. Among the slain was Lieutenant Shirasawa, who had served with great distinction at Hamatan, where he led his section up a hill and

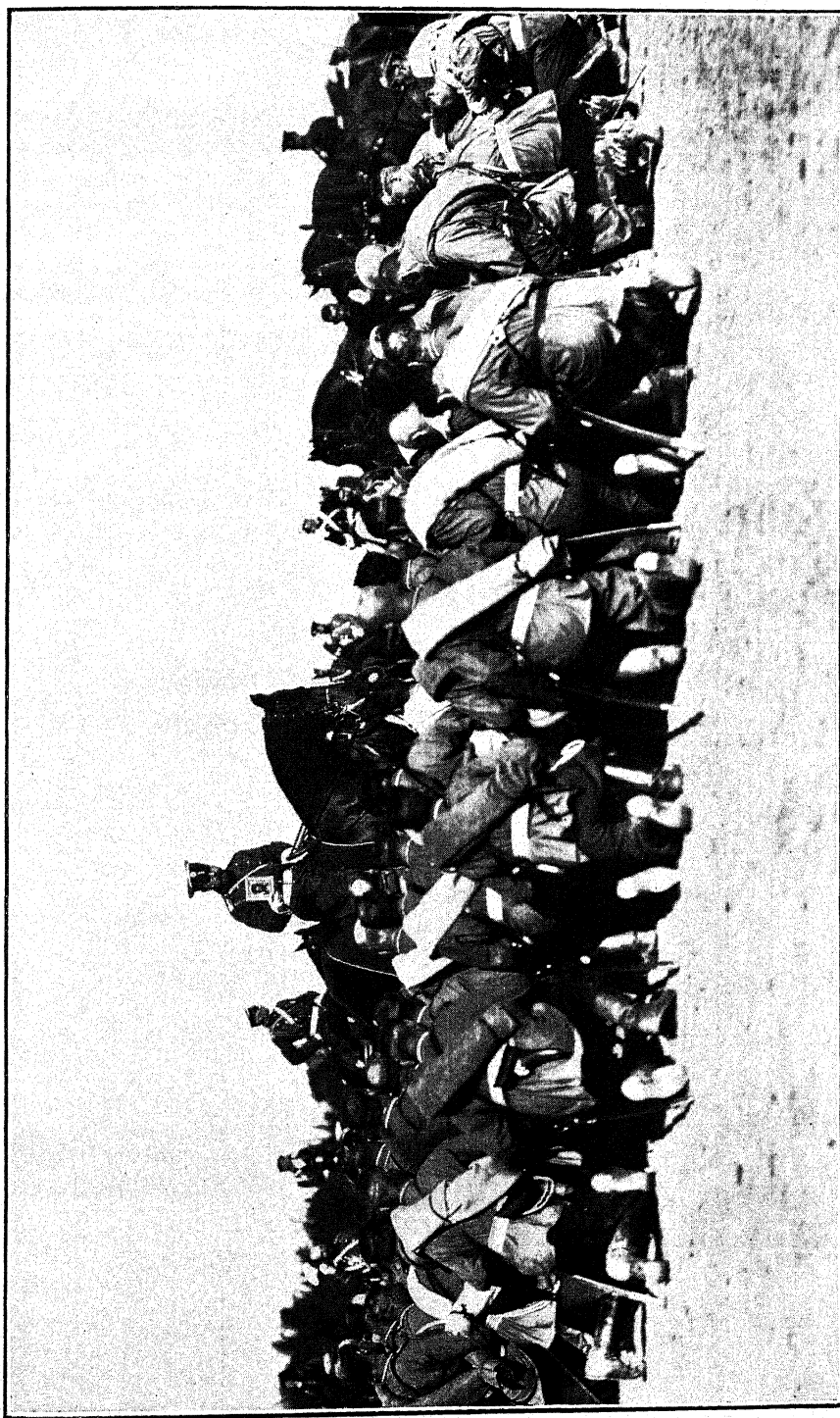


Photo: "Collier's Weekly."

THE TSAR AS THE "LITTLE FATHER."

This picture gives a vivid idea of the patriarchal character of the Tsar, who is head not only of the army but also of the Church. He is holding an "eikon," or sacred picture, which is very popular in Russia, where it is regarded as a sort of talisman. The soldiers are kneeling round their "little father," getting his blessing.



captured a Russian battalion. Lieutenant Kiyokka, a member of a noble family, was also killed. With his last breath he cried, 'Long live the Mikado!'

Passing to the manner in which the Japanese troops at the Motien-ling held the Russian right, while the flank attacks were being developed, the *Standard* correspondent adds:—

"Our centre at Motien-ling remained inactive in the meantime, its purpose being to threaten the Russian right while the attack was being pressed on both flanks.

"This was not a difficult task, nor an unwelcome one, for the sun was blazing down upon us. We watched in tranquillity the development of the turning movement.

"In the early morning we had seen a few of the enemy's horsemen in the valley of To-wan, which divided the Russian position, and had also observed, at the base of the pagoda, a dummy battery. But the real artillery position was on a sharp ridge to the east.

"From this lofty height, between two conical peaks, the enemy's guns kept up a steady cannonade. Their shells searched closely the spur on the western front of the pass, where two of our batteries were posted.

"Here again the Russian gunners displayed unwonted skill, and proved the superior weight and range of their weapons. The trees on the hill in front of them had been felled, and the range measured to a yard.

"The accuracy of the shooting became apparent when the shells began to burst in the midst of our battery, wounding several of the men—among them the officer in command, who was slightly injured—and sending the others to cover.

"There was, however, one gun in

position on a slope to the left of the Pass which the enemy had not succeeded in locating, so carefully had it been concealed.

"Hour after hour went by, and the cannonade neither paused nor ceased. The hills echoed with the roar of it, and the sky was flecked with tiny white clouds, out of which poured down a hail of lead. It began to look as if the day was to end as it had begun, with the duel of artillery.

"Our left wing had been checked. So much was manifest from the continued inaction of the centre, whose movements were dependent on success in other parts of the field. What was happening on our right, where we knew that a large force was at close grips with the enemy?

"At half-past two in the afternoon there were symptoms among the Russians of a disposition to retire. The movement seemed to argue that we had scored a success on our flank, but it was of short duration.

"The guns continued to speak, and towards five o'clock began to turn their attention to the valley fronting our position.

"Into this valley was descending a large body of infantry. It advanced speedily in open order, forming two sides of a triangle, with the points turned towards the right and left of the position held by the Russian guns.

"From the pyramid-shaped hill to the south rose up more riflemen, who had lain for hours, like yellow stones in a ploughed field. They, too, descended into the valley at right angles to the line of the infantry advance.

"Then our centre moving rapidly forward, with the Japanese colours flying as a warning to our batteries, began to threaten the enemy's right.

"The key to the position was now in our hands, and the left wing was free to press the assault.

"The order was given for a general advance, and the whole line surged forwards. The Russian guns were withdrawn in haste. One was struck by a shell and sent spinning down the hill. The muzzle buried itself deep in the ground, and, as we came up to it, we could see a shell still lying in the open breach.

"Another gun, breaking loose, tumbled down the precipitous slope, and lay turned up on end in the road near the village of Tien-yu-cheng.

"The gunners had removed the breech-block, but the presence of two score live shells in the emplacements above was proof of the haste with which they had abandoned the position.

"Though our left wing was now free to move, the advance was still difficult and hazardous. A thickly-wooded hill, fortified with a triple line of trenches, remained in the possession of the enemy, and was defended with desperate gallantry.

"The plunging fire directed against them by our batteries on the neighbouring heights made no apparent effect, so thoroughly were the Russians concealed. But the situation was an obviously hopeless one, and the remnant of the defending force eventually fell back.

"At dusk our centre occupied Tien-tzu-ling, a village on the road to Liao-yang. Our left was in possession of To-wan and the neighbourhood, where it made ready to drive the enemy from the Pass to the north.

"But force was no longer called for. The Russians retreated in the night to another position five miles to the north."

The concluding statement seems to require some slight modification. In his official report General Kuroki says that by sunset his troops had carried the enemy's principal positions, but that a portion of the enemy offered the most stubborn resistance, and that the Japanese therefore bivouacked on the night of July 31st in battle formation. "At day-break on August 1st," says the General, "we resumed attack, and at 8 a.m. all heights fell into our hands, and the enemy fled towards Tang-ho-yen."

The total casualties during the battles of Yu-shi-ling-tzu and Yang-tzu-ling must have been very large. General Kuroki's report of his own losses include 40 officers and 900 men killed and wounded. He believes that the enemy's losses were at least double. Eight Russian officers and 149 men were taken prisoners, and two guns and 500 rifles were captured.

Among the Russian killed was the General commanding, Count Fedor Keller, an extremely interesting personality. Count Keller belonged to a well-known Prussian family which was ennobled by the Austrian Government in 1737, and has many important Continental connections. Count Fedor himself was related to several distinguished French families, being a cousin of the Marquis de Beauvoir, and was *persona grata* in France, where he had followed the French manoeuvres, and had been created a Commander of the Legion of Honour. General Keller, who was born in 1850, had had a notable career, having succeeded Kuropatkin as Skobelev's aide-de-camp when the present Russian Commander-in-Chief was wounded in the Shipka Pass in 1877. He retired on half-pay in 1887, but seven years later was appointed Governor of Ekaterinoslaf.

At the beginning of the war he volunteered for service in the Far East, and was employed for a time as Intelligence Officer. He was much esteemed by Kuropatkin, who, on his arrival at the front, presented him to the troops as the man most fitted to revive the Skobelev

of first-class ability, and by some Continental critics his loss at such a juncture was regarded as irreparable.

The death of this fine officer was evidently due to reckless self-exposure. An eye-witness says that when the artillery fire on the 31st ult. began to slacken,



LIEUT.-GENERAL COUNT KELLER.

tradition. When General Sassulitch was recalled after the battle of Kiu-lien-cheng, Count Keller was appointed to supersede him. Although he had not been by any means successful in either his defence of, or his attempt to recapture, the Motienling, Count Keller was evidently regarded in the Russian Army as a leader

Count Keller proceeded to make an inspection of his positions. "On arriving at the passes he was warned that he was the object of the enemy's fire. The General, who had now reached a battery in a somewhat exposed position, thereupon dismounted; but, notwithstanding this, almost immediately afterwards a



shrapnel shell burst three paces from him between two of the guns. The General was thrown to the ground. A sergeant rushed up and tried to raise him, but Count Keller only said, 'Leave me alone,' and expired in a few minutes. He had been struck by two fragments in the head, and by three others in the chest, besides which he had thirty-one shrapnel bullet wounds in different parts of his body."

There are several interesting features to which attention may be drawn in connection with, more especially, the Yang-tzu-ling battle. The fighting for both

sides was an extremely exhausting business, for this summer in Manchuria is an exceptionally hot one, and the temperature during July 31st is reported by General Kuroki to have been 100 degrees Fahrenheit. But with this exception the disadvantages seem to have been entirely on the side of the attack. The steepness of the ground and the lack of suitable artillery positions are specially noticed by the victorious commander; but it is evident that the Russians, in addition to their improved artillery practice, had taken special pains with their trenches, and defended them with great skill and



Photo: "Collier's Weekly."

JAPANESE RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES IN THE FIELD.

A Shinto service at Feng-Hwang-Cheng in the presence of the Japanese General Staff and Military Attachés.



tenacity. The manner in which the attack on the Russian right was checked was in marked contrast with previous exhibitions of irresolution on the development of a flank attack. It is said, on the other hand, that no effort was made to screen the Russian artillery, and that indirect fire was not attempted. Speaking generally, the battle may be said to have been won by the patience, persistence, and desperate gallantry of the Japanese infantry. As to results, the Russian barrier has been pushed back, and the Japanese have gained at least ten miles in their advance towards Liao-yang. Incidentally, it is remarked by Continental critics that the bulk of the troops which General Kuroki has thus unceremoniously pushed out of what seemed almost impregnable positions belonged to newly-arrived Army Corps. It had been confidently predicted, by German experts more particularly, that the stability and uniform constitution of these fresh European troops would enable them to make a much better show than their Siberian comrades. The result, however, has shown that even these new arrivals are hardly a match for the once despised, but now thoroughly respected, "yellow-skins."

We must now leave General Kuroki in order to see how admirably his efforts at Yu-shu-ling-tzu and Yang-tzu-ling have been seconded by the "Takushan Army," and by General Oku, having as their immediate objectives Tomuchan (Shimucheng) and Hai-cheng respectively.

If we turn back to page 509 we shall see that on the eve of General Oku's attack on Ta-shi-chao the Takushan Army sent out a detachment in the direction of Tomuchan, which encountered, a little to the east of the latter, the 17th

Siberian Rifles. It would seem from what follows that this regiment must be part of a force of about two divisions which, under General Alexeieff, has for many weeks past been working hard to make the most of an important position at Tomuchan. The actual Russian position, which was strongly fortified, appears to have extended along a range of heights two or three miles north of Tomuchan, the right resting on Hung-yao-ling, which appears to lie about four or five miles north-west of Tomuchan, and about ten or eleven miles south-east of Hai-cheng. Against this position the Takushan Army moved on July 30th, deploying westward from a place called Ta-fang-shen, some three miles south-east of Tomuchan, until the whole line of the Russian defences was faced and, on the right, slightly overlapped by Japanese troops.

At dawn on July 31st the Japanese commenced what seems at first to have differed very slightly from a frontal attack, in the course of which the Russian right, where there was a strong artillery position, proved a very hard nut to crack, owing to constant reinforcements both in men and guns, the number of the latter being increased to twenty-one. The Japanese left, however, was correspondingly stiffened, and at 3 p.m., after a hot cannonade, the Russians were driven back. Meanwhile, the Japanese main body had attained some success among the highlands on the Russian left, forcing the enemy out of their infantry positions at 10 a.m. Continuing the advance, it was checked by the heavy fire from the Russian artillery posted on the heights, and at 5 p.m. was suddenly called upon to assume the defensive against a brisk Russian counterstroke. The enemy had been strongly reinforced,

but their efforts proved ineffectual. The Japanese were well prepared, and the Russians found themselves smartly repulsed, with heavy loss. Again the Japanese would have advanced, but were prevented by the admirable manner in which the Russian artillery was served. The Japanese official report makes particular mention of the "quick-firers," and the extent to which they impeded the advance.

At the close of the day the two armies bivouacked close to each other. During the night the Russians evidently took into grave consideration the success of the Japanese left wing during the previous day, and, fearing lest daylight should bring about a determined effort to cut their line of retreat, they took advantage of the darkness to retire to Hai-cheng. This performance could hardly have been a premeditated one in view of the pains taken to strengthen the Tomuchan position, and the useful purpose it served in hindering any junction between the Second and Takushan Armies.

The losses of the Russians in the Tomuchan engagement must have been very large, since it is officially stated that about 700 Russian corpses were buried by the Japanese. The latter also captured six field guns, many rifles and shells, and large quantities of flour and barley. But these notable results were not achieved without considerable sacrifice. The Japanese casualties are returned at 194 killed and 666 wounded.

But the advance of the Takushan Army against Tomuchan is not the only southern movement in co-ordination with Kuroki's attacks on the barrier in front of him. On August 1st the Second Army under General Oku leaves Ta-shi-chao in five columns and advances on Hai-cheng. Here at one time it was suspected that

the Russians would make a specially determined stand, but Kuropatkin's policy is still one of gradual withdrawal, and, accordingly, on August 3rd we have General Oku's Army entering Hai-cheng practically unopposed, and also occupying Old Niu-chwang, which lies some thirty miles north-east of the Port at the mouth of the Liao river.

There is little or no information concerning this advance, but it appears to have closely resembled the rest of the recent operations in the north of the Liaotung Peninsula. The Russians are said to have fought several rear-guard actions before finally evacuating Hai-cheng, and General Kuropatkin claims that the eventual retirement along the An-shan-chan road was carried out in perfect order without any molestation by the enemy. "Every effort," he adds, "was made to lighten the burdens of the infantry, and carts were given to each company to carry the men's great-coats and the kit bags. Nevertheless, the heat of the sun was so intense that, in spite of the measures taken to relieve the soldiers, the number of the men who succumbed to sunstroke was considerable."

A good deal of sympathy will undoubtedly be felt with the Russian soldier in these trying circumstances. It has already been hinted that he has begun to grumble at the continual "strategical retirements" in which he is compelled to take part, and from the letters which are beginning to appear in the Russian and German papers it is evident that he has other and substantial causes for complaint. The tinned food is said to be scarcely fit to eat, and where it is edible it is neither nourishing nor sustaining. Provisions, moreover, are sometimes wanting altogether, and the medical and sanitary arrangements not at all what they

should be. Even the doctors, though admitted to be devoted to their work, are said to be often insufficiently trained and badly equipped. Lastly, the heavy boots with which the Russian soldier is shod are a grievous burden, alike in the frightful heat and in the alternating spells of torrential rains which convert the lowlands into a sea of mire.

While, then, the Russian generals may talk proudly of the "perfect order" in which their repeated withdrawals from strong positions are carried out, there is little question that the sufferings of the rank and file are not calculated to keep them consistently at any very high pitch of either fighting efficiency or fighting enthusiasm.

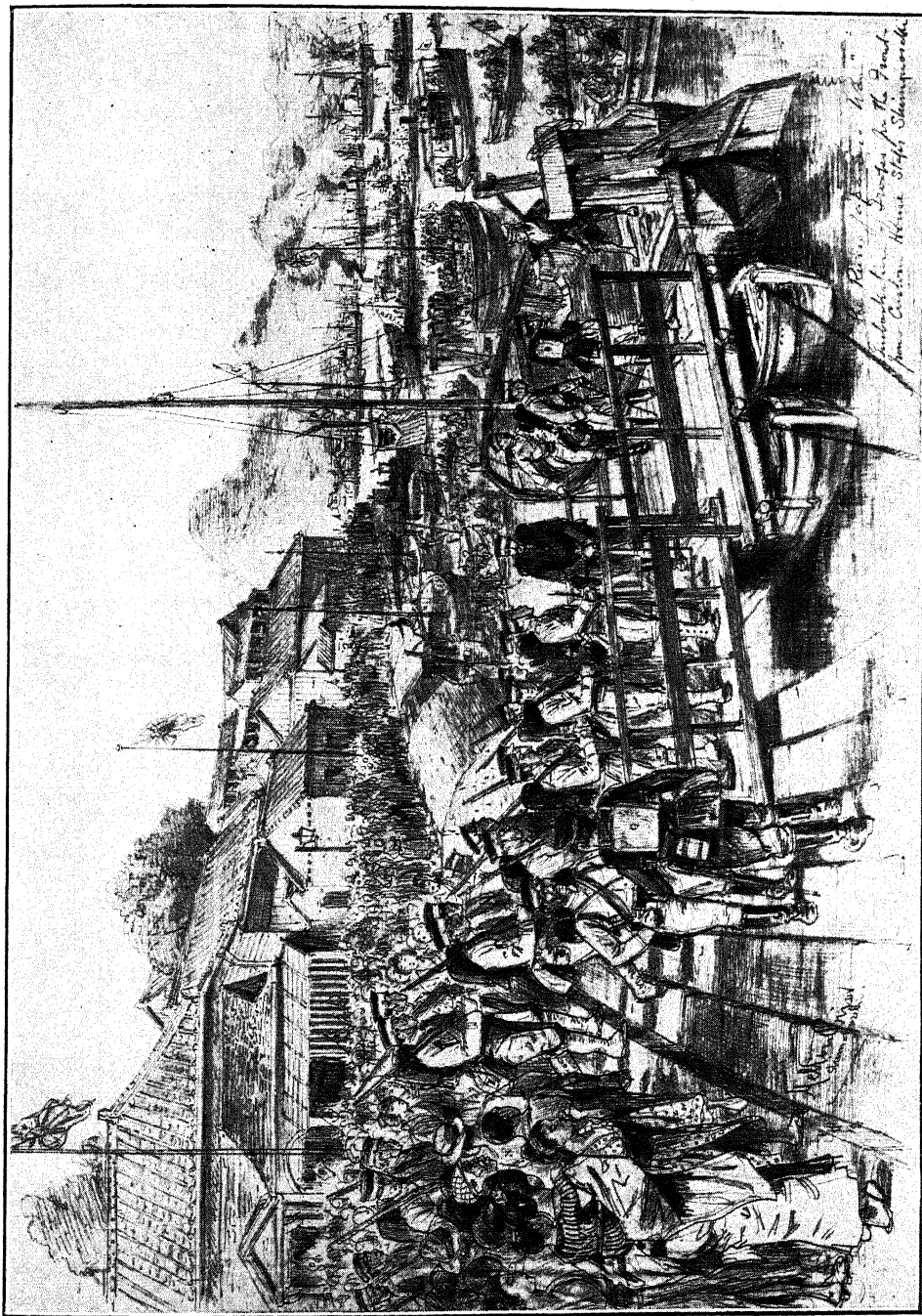
Very different is the case of the Japanese soldier, now engaged in the comparatively exhilarating process of pursuit. Certainly, he has discomforts to endure, but the trouble which is taken to alleviate them, and the anxious solicitude displayed in continually oiling, as it were, every little wheel and rod in the military locomotive are truly remarkable. For in the Far East little can be done in this way by unpremeditated effort, however heroic, on the spot. Everything, more especially in the way of supply and transport, has to be thought out months before, and a host of ingenious precautions taken against the constant probability of a break-down.

From time to time, in the course of this narrative, casual allusions have been made to the Japanese supply and transport arrangements; but now an opportunity occurs for making a more detailed reference to this extremely important, and by no means uninteresting, subject. In a letter of considerable length, the *Times* correspondent deals specially with "The Transport of the Japanese Army," in-

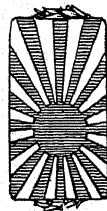
cluding some mention of the supply depôts; and from this valuable communication—all the more valuable because it is evidently based on an intimate knowledge of our own Indian system, hitherto regarded as "bad to beat"—an excellent idea may be gleaned of the thoroughness and marvellous grasp of local requirements which the Japanese have applied to this extraordinarily significant branch of their warlike preparations.

The Japanese regular transport system, as already pointed out in Chapter XXVI., is a three-fold one, including horse-carts, hand-carts, and pack-horses; and to this are added, as opportunity serves or occasion requires, coolies and the local cart transport available more particularly in Manchuria. The horse-cart is thus described in detail by the *Times* correspondent:—"It consists of a platform of light bars of wood, 6 ft. long and 30 in. broad, placed upon an axle fitted into wheels 3 ft. in height, so that the floor of the cart is raised from the level of the ground only some 18 in. In front there is a skeleton framework of light iron rising 2 ft. above the body of the cart, upon which is a seat for the driver. The shafts, after leaving the sides of the cart, make a sweep upward so as to reach the level of the flanks of an ordinary sized Japanese horse. The wheels look very little stouter than those of a perambulator, but being built of thoroughly seasoned wood, and being well tired, they are much stronger than they look. The whole cart is firmly bound together and braced by light iron-work. Harness (of a very serviceable kind) and cart together weigh 400 lb."

The transport horses, as to which a very unfavourable opinion was formed by correspondents who saw them when they were first landed at Chemulpo and Chinnampo, have turned out a good deal



"EACH MAN A HOUSEHOLD": JAPANESE TROOPS, WITH FULL KIT, EMBARKING FROM THE CUSTOM HOUSE STEPS AT SHIMONOSEKI.



better than was expected. Of these maligned animals the authority quoted gives a particularly interesting and instructive account. "Out of thousands," he says, "which I passed on the road to An-tung I did not see one which did not step jauntily along, making light of the loaded cart to which it was harnessed. The horses were the same—skinny and weedy. But every neck was arched, every coat shone like silk, every eye was bright, every ear alert. Truly, three months of regular daily work had agreed with these animals. And for excellent reasons. The Japanese have the reputation of being bad horsemasters; and so, indeed, they often appear to be. But in dealing with their transport horses they have exercised great judgment. They have acted on the principle which a prudent man adopts in regard to his income—that of living within it. They ask a horse to do only that which is easily within his compass. They load him, not with what he can pull on the level road, but with what he can drag up a steep mountain pass without inducing serious fatigue. The weight of an average Japanese horse is over 800 lb. With a load of 400 lb., and a cart weighing a similar amount, we have a total well within the draught capacity of the animal employed. Twelve to eighteen miles loaded, and the return journey empty, is the task usually allotted to the horse and cart. It has been found that work to this extent can be endured for twenty to thirty consecutive days, after which the horses become rather fine drawn and are given a day off.

"It is interesting to note that on occasion the cart transport with the drivers seated can cover a distance of four kilometres in twenty minutes, a performance, I think, beyond the capacity of the

regular transport service of any other army in the world. The daily ration of each horse is 8 lb. of uncrushed barley, 8 lb. of hay, and 8 lb. of straw, of which the latter two items have frequently to be reduced, as the Japanese depend on the country through which they are marching, and cannot always obtain them in sufficient quantities. The veterinary returns for the horses of the 12th Division, which was the first to land, and which made the trying journey from Chemulpo to Ping-yang which the horses of the other divisions escaped, show a decrease in effective strength of 6 per cent. Mortality accounts for only a small portion of the losses, the greater part being due to sore backs, from which the animals affected are fast recovering. This remarkable result has been attained by the moderate nature of the tasks imposed upon their horses by the Japanese, and by the fact that they never work a sick, lame, or exhausted horse. At the first sign of unfitness the animal is passed over to the veterinary department for treatment."

The hand-carts are built on the same idea as the horse, or rather pony, carts, and resemble the now familiar jinrickshaw, having short shafts joined by a cross-bar, and weighing about 200 lb. "One coolie between the shafts pushes and steers on the cross-bar, another pushes behind, whilst one, two, or three more are available to drag with ropes or help otherwise as circumstances demand. Here again there is applied the principle of requiring only work well within the capacity of the worker. The coolies look the picture of health, strength, and cheerfulness. They are not so dapper in appearance as when they landed, and many have discarded the army boot in favour of Korean sandals, and even bare feet.

They are easily capable of transporting a load of 300 lb. fifteen miles per day and making the return journey empty-handed. At a pinch they can do thirty miles with a full load. So well is it within the power of the appointed number of coolies to manage their work, that their strength to each cart is frequently cut down to four, and even three. The percentage of sickness amongst these men is the astonishingly small one of 2 per cent. The unintermittent labour, of a kind accomplished without any undue strain on the vitality, and the simple, yet ample, ration of rice, has built up these young fellows, already chosen for compactness of physique, into splendid specimens of their race."

The pack-saddle is of the Indian pattern, but half the weight. Indeed, the Japanese appear to have studied our Indian system most carefully, and then to have set to work to introduce improvements with, it must be admitted, conspicuous success. On the other hand, the fact that, putting aside ammunition, for which the usual heavy waggons are provided, the main requirements of Japanese troops are rice, with barley for the horses, makes the problem of transport much easier for Japan than for any country whose marching columns include European troops. Both rice and barley can be, and are, packed in bags, the former weighing about 70 lbs., the latter about 40 lbs., thus enabling them to be readily carried either in carts or by pack-horses or coolies.

Mention has before been made in these pages of the perfection of the Japanese supply arrangements; but the following little picture of a Japanese supply depôt must not be missed: "The little plain by the depôt is one mass of men and horses. Approaching from all directions

are endless trains of transport carts, pack-horses, hand carts, Chinese carts, wheelbarrows, and Korean coolies, who have hung on to the army, reaping a golden harvest by carrying rice sacks at a daily wage five times as high as they have been accustomed to earn. From the depôt run roads to each point of the compass, and at the beginning of each road stands a pulpit-like erection in which sit uniformed tally-clerks, who check the incoming and outgoing goods. Here and there are little encampments where Japanese merchants have set up business to cater to the soldiers. You can buy beer, saké, hot tea, tinned food, biscuits, cigarettes, writing materials, and a host of other things that the soldier wants.

It is one of the distinctive features of a Japanese army that wherever it goes the little private purveyor is allowed to follow. He is a champion robber, and mulcts his customers one hundred per cent. But then it costs him a good deal to bring his goods to market, and there is risk and hardship; so perhaps his prices are not so high after all, particularly when one remembers the anguish of paying in South Africa a sovereign for a bottle of bad whisky, five shillings a tin for butter, and half-a-crown for a tin of milk. The Chinaman, too, is glad to turn an honest penny, and he offers bread, cakes, eggs, and vegetables. There is thus a large selection of eatables, and I make a satisfactory lunch on beer, hard-boiled eggs, and a Chinese roll."

What a contrast all this with the surroundings of the Russian soldier. That the Russian supply and transport arrangements are altogether bad cannot be seriously maintained, but, even if they were very much better than we have reason to believe is the case, it would be impossible for them to work altogether



satisfactorily under conditions of almost uninterrupted retirement. The wonder is that the Russian Army hangs together so well as it does in circumstances calculated to take the heart out of almost any troops. Conversely, we must remember that, although even when things are going smoothly in the field, the transport and supply of large armies is a most difficult and exhausting business. we have as yet

only seen the Japanese system working in success. It is not altogether certain that arrangements so precise, and to some extent complicated, would not be liable to serious disorganisation in the case of a long series of rear-guard actions, such as the Russians have fought since the day their venture southward was so rudely checked by General Oku at Telissu.



BRINGING A WOUNDED RUSSIAN INTO THE JAPANESE LINES.

*By this method of conveyance jolting is almost obviated, as the short bamboos on which the slings are hung act like springs. In dealing with the wounded the Japanese have cared for friend and foe alike.*



*Photo: S. Cribb, Southsea.*

TYPICAL GROUP OF NAVAL OFFICERS.

*(Taken on board the "Mikasa," now Admiral Togo's flagship.)*

## CHAPTER XLIX.

NAVAL SORTIE FROM PORT ARTHUR—THE JAPANESE ON THE ALERT—A FLEET ACTION AT SEA—BATTLESHIPS AT CLOSE QUARTERS—THE RUSSIAN FLEET DISPERSED—LOSSES AND INJURIES—AN EPOCH-MAKING FIGHT.

IT is 5 o'clock in the morning of August 13th when the overture to one of the greatest performances of the war begins. Within the next fifteen hours we are to see what with studied accuracy has been described as "the first serious fleet action on blue water in the history of armoured navies," an event for which the critics of half a score of nations have been eagerly waiting, and which, however inconclusive the result, cannot but add greatly to the sum of naval knowledge. For such one-sided conflicts as the so-called Battle of the Yalu in 1894, and the naval Battle of Manila Bay and Santiago in 1898, have left untouched several great

problems, the solution of which can only be hoped for when two fleets of something like equal size and strength come into collision under leaders desperately determined to make the most of their respective opportunities.

The day thus fraught with tremendous issues has been slowly but surely led up to by a series of incidents, of which the most important were related in the last chapter but one. We have seen how carefully Admiral Togo has kept watch and ward over the entrance to Port Arthur harbour; we have noted the unremitting industry with which the work of repairing the damaged Russian ships



has been carried on ; and particular stress has been laid on the significance from the naval standpoint of the land attack on Wolf's Hill. It is this latter circumstance that now brings matters, as regards the Port Arthur Fleet, to a head, and eventually produces the general action at sea, which twice before—on April 13th and June 23rd—has been within an ace of happening.

Through the narrow opening between Obelisk Hill and Poya-shan the Japanese siege guns on Wolf's Hill begin, from about August 7th, to pour shells upon the Russian anchorage, and on the 8th Admiral Vitoft reports that the commander of the *Retvisan*, Captain Shtchensnovitch, has been wounded, and that his own position has become intolerable. Admiral Alexeieff accordingly forwards to Admiral Vitoft the Tsar's orders to effect a sortie and, if possible, a junction with the Vladivostok Squadron. At dawn on August 10th the operation commences by the movement of the Port Arthur Fleet from the inner harbour into the outer roadstead.

At 8.30 the following vessels leave the entrance to the harbour preceded by a flotilla of mine-clearing launches :— Battleships, *Tsarevitch* (flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Vitoft, commanding the squadron), *Retvisan*, *Pobieda*, *Peresviet* (flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky, commanding the ironclad division), *Sevastopol*, *Poltava*; cruisers, *Askold* (flying the flag of Rear-Admiral Reitzenstein, commanding the cruiser division), *Pallada*, *Diana*, and *Novik*. The last-named goes ahead of the squadron, and eight torpedo craft of the first division are posted near the leading battleship. Two gunboats and the second division of torpedo craft accompany the exit of the squadron, in order to protect

the mine-clearing flotilla on its way back. The hospital ship *Mongolia*, flying the Red Cross flag, steams on one side of the squadron. A good many hopes, and perhaps some fears, must be packed away in this imposing procession of fine ships, which, with becoming caution, begins to make its way across the mined roadsteads that separate the harbour entrance from the open sea. But uppermost, no doubt, is a feeling of profound relief at escaping from the thralldom of the siege, and especially the recent storm of shells, to which it was not possible to make effective reply. With this must be coupled strong regret at leaving so many brave comrades still exposed to the unwearying attentions of the Japanese gunners, and particularly at having to part with the trusty *Bayan*, which cannot join in the sortie by reason of serious damage too recently received to have rendered timely repair possible.

From the time the sortie commenced the Japanese must have been on the watch, and, as soon as the movement out of the harbour is perceptible, a message is despatched by wireless telegraphy to Admiral Togo, who is doubtless at or near the naval base in the Elliot Group. We learn that the news is "received with delight." Admiral Togo rapidly makes all his dispositions, his plan being "to draw the Russians as far south as possible, in order to prevent a repetition of the fiasco of June 23rd." He is not, of course, aware what the Russian destination is, and so steers south, relying on his scouts to give him constant information of the enemy's proceedings.

At nine o'clock the Russian commander hoists the signal to make for Vladivostok. A thrill of satisfaction runs through the fleet at the issue of an order which may mean a bright ending to a sadly

inglorious term of wearing watching, and which must mean bringing matters to a clear issue by the stern arbitrament of a fight. For there can hardly be a Russian bluejacket that does not know what the gradual thickening of the Japanese ships on the horizon means. Twice have the

Russians seen the battle-flags hoisted on Admiral Togo's splendid squadron, and well they know that it was not he who refused battle on those memorable occasions. "Make for Vladivostok" is a goodly signal; but between Port Arthur and the Golden Horn lie all the countless possibilities included in the now certain prospect of a determined, probably decisive fight.

Successfully, if somewhat tediously, the Russian ships thread their way across the roadstead, at the bottom of which there must lie enough mines, Russian and Japanese, to send half-a-dozen squadrons to destruction. The passage takes two hours, and it is not until 10.15 that the mine-clearing flotilla returns to Port Arthur under escort of the gunboats and the second torpedo-boat division.

The squadron now steams out, making at first eight and then ten knots, and

reaches the open sea. At noon the speed is thirteen knots. By this time the combined Fleet of Japan has been sighted in three divisions, the first being to the port of the Russian ships, steaming so as to cross their course. This division includes the battleships *Mikasa* (flying the flag of

Admiral Togo, commanding the Fleet), *Asahi*, *Shikishima*, *Fuji*, and *Yashima*, with the new armoured cruisers, *Nisshin* and *Kasuga*.

On the horizon are two other divisions, one consisting of the one armoured and three protected cruisers, the other of one armoured and four protected cruisers, with the old battleship *Tsin-yen*, and about forty torpedo-craft.

The squadrons gradually approach, the Japanese ships being to the east.

At 12.30 a point some twenty-five miles south of Port Arthur having been reached, Admiral Togo signals to his ships to go into action. The Russians respond by forming single column line ahead—a formation of which a graphic illustration is given on page 96—with the *Tsarevitch* leading. At 1 p.m. the fight begins.

It is a tremendous moment. The long



Photo: Daziaro, St. Petersburg.

ADMIRAL UKHTOMSKY.

lines, which for some time have been nearly parallel, converge slightly; the Admirals and Captains in their conning towers gaze anxiously to east and west, as the case may be, watching the decreasing interval; the sailors stand to their guns, the tension growing almost beyond human endurance; and on, on, go the great ships, steaming well within their powers, for, when both sides in a great encounter at sea mean fighting, it is the capacity to hit, not the capacity to overtake or to run away, which first needs exhibition.

A roar breaks the close stillness of the summer day as the action opens with shells from the battleships' big guns—shells weighing between seven and eight hundredweight, and specially pointed for armour-piercing purposes. The Russian aim is not good, probably because the gunners have had little practice in firing at moving objects from moving platforms. Shot after shot flies wide, and the hope of scoring early by reason of the possession of a battleship to the good, grows gradually fainter.

The Japanese, on the other hand, now profit by the constant opportunities they have enjoyed during the past six months, at any rate, of firing from moving platforms, and the efforts of their gunners are well seconded by the scientific training of the officers in the art of calculating distances. Time after time the Japanese shells go home against the armoured sides of the Russian battleships, for it is upon these that Admiral Togo's fire is mainly concentrated. Twice the lines approach and recede during the first two and a half hours of fighting which constitute the first phase of the battle, and then at 3.30 the two fleets separate for an hour. In this interval it is found that, among other damage, the Russian cruiser

*Askold*, which has been following directly behind the battleship *Poltava*, has been struck in the forward funnel by a shell which has rendered the forward boiler useless.

The Russian cruiser squadron now leaves the line and takes up a position with the leading ship level with the *Tsarevitch*, on the port side. At about half-past five the Japanese Fleet again approaches, and the Russians open fire, which is largely concentrated on Admiral Togo's flagship. A trifle like this, however, does not disconcert the Commander-in-Chief, who remains quite unconcerned, and calmly directs every operation.

The Russian vessels now change their direction to the south-east, and the Japanese follow the movement closely. At 7.30 the fight, which until now has brought no serious disadvantage to either side, suddenly changes in character. The Russian battleship *Tsarevitch* is still gallantly leading the line and keeping up a constant fire, when almost simultaneously two great disasters overtake her. The gallant Admiral Vitoft is struck by fragments of a shell, loses both legs, and dies instantly; and another shell strikes the flag-ship on the port side, damaging her engines and steering gear. The *Tsarevitch* falls suddenly out of the line to starboard, making the signal "The Admiral transfers the command," and the ships following put their helms to port and starboard in order to avoid collision, and fall into confusion.

The Japanese are quick to seize such a favourable opportunity. Closing in to about 3,500 yards they pour in a hot fire, and do more damage apparently in the ensuing half-hour than has been done in the whole action hitherto. One after the other the Russian battleships are struck and damaged so seriously that their fire

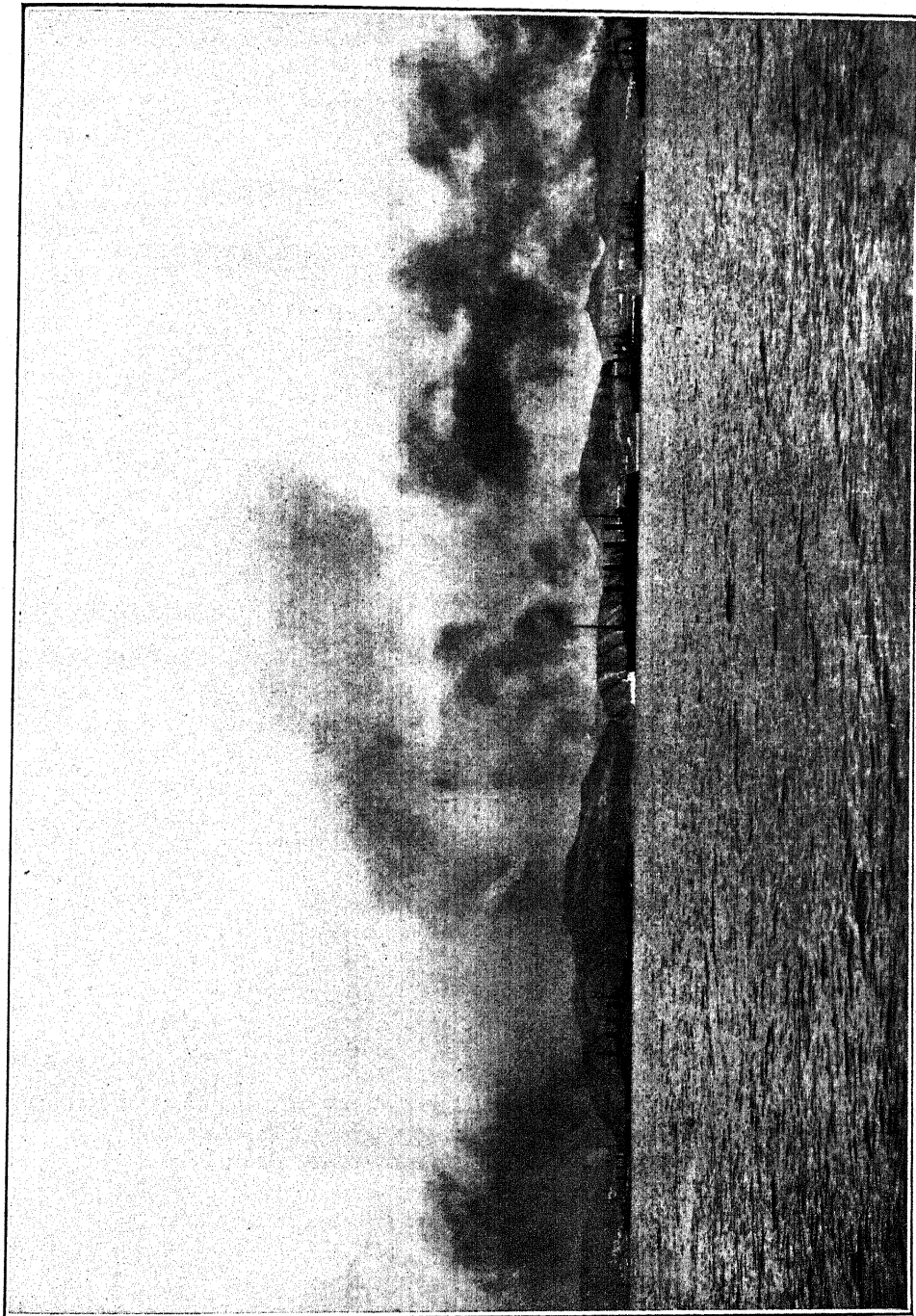


Photo: Nouvelle, Paris

A SORTIE FROM PORT ARTHUR.

*Impressive spectacle afforded by the Russian fleet assembled in the roadstead after clearing the harbour entrance.*

is virtually silenced. The *Retvisan* holds out stubbornly, being handled with conspicuous gallantry; but Admiral Togo orders his squadron to concentrate its fire upon her at little over 3,000 yards, and she, too, is soon reduced to fitful discharges from one or two of her guns.

Meanwhile, the Russian cruiser division commanded by Rear-Admiral Reitzenstein, who flies his flag on the *Askold*, has been, practically speaking, inactive. In an engagement of this character the brunt of the fighting falls naturally on the battleships, and the cruisers, unless very heavily armed, like the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga*, do well to keep out of the way of firing against which their comparatively light armour affords no adequate protection, and to which they cannot effectively reply. It has already been mentioned that in the second phase of this fight the cruisers *Askold*, *Novik*, *Diana*, and *Pallada* took up a position to the starboard of the battleship line, and it may readily be imagined that when Admiral Reitzenstein perceived that the *Tsarevitch* had been practically disabled, and read the signal "The Admiral transfers the command," he felt that his position had suddenly become one of grave responsibility. It is said that the last signal which Admiral Vitoft personally ordered to be made was "Remember the Tsar's command not to return to Port Arthur," and in any case it must have been clearly impressed upon all the subordinate commanders before leaving harbour that morning that every sort of effort should be made to reach Vladivostok. As the Russian battleship squadron is now clearly getting the worst of it in circumstances in which the cruisers could not lend any practical assistance, it would seem that Admiral Reitzenstein is fully justified in deciding to break through the

enemy's line without loss of time. What immediately follows is best told in the Admiral's own words:—"Having signalled to my squadron to follow me, I left with the *Askold* at the head to cut a passage. We were struck by the opening shots. Behind me came the *Novik*, and at some distance followed the *Pallada* and the *Diana*. The cruiser squadron was sent to cut another passage, and encountered four of the enemy's second-class cruisers and several torpedo-boats, while to the right of it were three cruisers of the *Matsushima* type.

"The seven Japanese ships riddled our cruisers with shells. Approaching the enemy's circle I remarked that one of the four cruisers blocking our way was a vessel of the *Asama* type. The quick-firing guns of the *Askold* seemed to do some damage to the three Japanese second-class cruisers; while they also set fire to the big cruiser, which then retired, leaving the *Askold* a free passage. Four of the enemy's battleships then approached and attacked the *Askold*, firing four torpedoes, which, however, did not hit her. A Japanese torpedo-boat was sunk by a lucky shot from one of the *Askold's* 6-in. guns, while another retreated precipitately."

According to Admiral Reitzenstein's official despatch, this cruiser action lasts twenty minutes, and is of a very lively character. Shells fall like hail, especially on the *Askold*, which, however, with the *Novik*, succeeds in getting through the enemy's line, followed by the *Pallada* and *Diana*. The Japanese cruisers give chase to the *Askold* and *Novik*, but these vessels, notwithstanding the hammering which the *Askold* has received, can still steam twenty knots, and so have little difficulty in drawing away from their pursuers. It is now dark, and Admiral Reitzenstein is

unable to make out whether the *Pallada* and *Diana* are following or not. As a matter of fact, the *Pallada* has dropped behind, and at dawn the next day is back in Port Arthur harbour. In the Japanese accounts of the battle it is stated that the fifth Japanese destroyer flotilla under Captain Mathuoka approached a cruiser of the *Pallada* type, and fired a torpedo at her from a distance

from its stern guns on the enemy's battleships. Rear-Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky, whose flag is flown on the *Peresviet*, has taken command, but is unable to signal his orders satisfactorily, owing to the damage to his flagship's masts. He displays the signal "Follow me" on the captain's bridge, but it is hardly likely that all the ships were able to distinguish it.

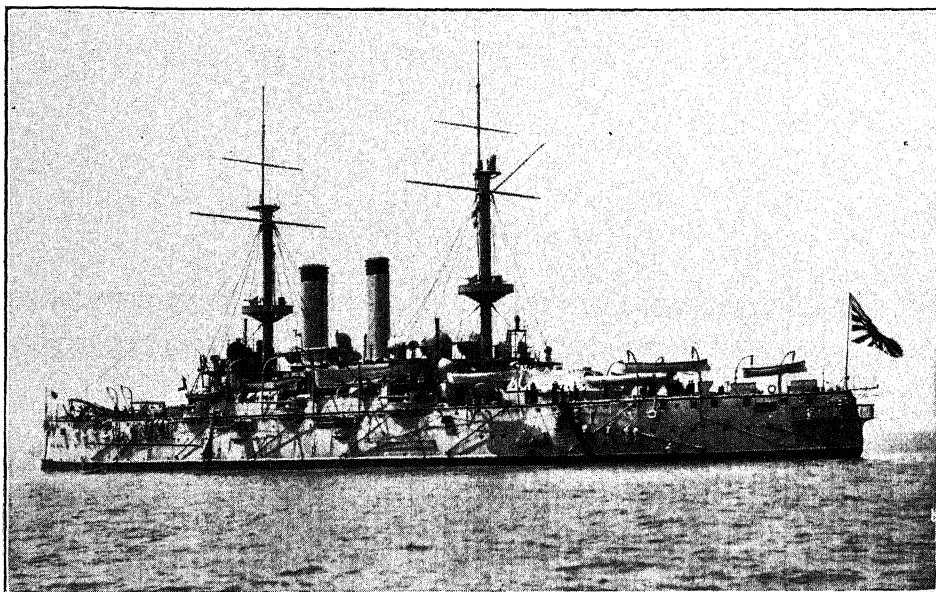


Photo: S. Cribb, Southsea.

THE JAPANESE BATTLESHIP FUSO.

of 400 yards. Captain Mathuoka saw the torpedo hit the vessel and explode. The inference is that either the *Pallada* reached Port Arthur in a very damaged condition, or that the stricken vessel was the *Diana*, which subsequently reaches the French port of Saigon. The *Diana* is a sister ship to the *Pallada*, and would easily be mistaken for her in a bad light.

It is time to return to the Russian battleship squadron, which is now falling back, at the same time keeping up a fire

As the *Peresviet* has lost many killed and wounded, and her armament, hull, and electric apparatus are seriously damaged, Prince Ukhtomsky decides, in contravention of the Imperial orders, to return to Port Arthur. The battleships *Retvisan*, *Pobieda*, *Sevastopol*, and the *Tsarevitch*, and the Red Cross ship *Mongolia*, start on the return course, but now the Japanese destroyers dash in and cause further damage and confusion. The *Tsarevitch* drops out, and, after repeated changes of course, owing to the



constant torpedo attacks, the shattered squadron regains with difficulty the harbour it had so proudly left the previous morning. At dawn only the battleships *Peresviet*, *Retvisan*, *Pobieda*, *Poltava*, and *Sevastopol*, and the cruiser *Pallada*, with three out of the eight destroyers, were at Port Arthur. The battleships are badly crippled, but Prince Ukhtomsky reports that in all only 38 men have been killed, and 21 officers and 286 men wounded, 50 severely; by no means a heavy list of casualties considering the fierceness of the engagement and the power of the enemy's armament.

The unfortunate *Tsarevitch* not being able to follow the battleship squadron, and losing sight of it, takes a southerly course in order to attempt to reach Vladivostok under her own steam. During the night she, too, is attacked by Japanese torpedo-boats, and at dawn is in the vicinity of the Shan-tung Promontory. An examination is now made of the ship, and her injuries are found to be such that Rear-Admiral Matussevitch, who is on board, decides that she cannot hope to make Vladivostok, and that the only course open is to proceed to the German port of Kiao-chau, in the hope of being allowed to repair. The ship has suffered terrible punishment. Her rudder shaft is broken and one gun disabled; her life-boats have been shot away, her masts are bent in the form of a cross, and the funnels riddled with shot. The bridge is twisted, and there are holes above the water line, which have been plugged with makeshift stoppers of wood. The damage to her engines is so considerable that she can only steam four knots—her nominal speed is eighteen—and she can only compass this by burning immense quantities of coal.

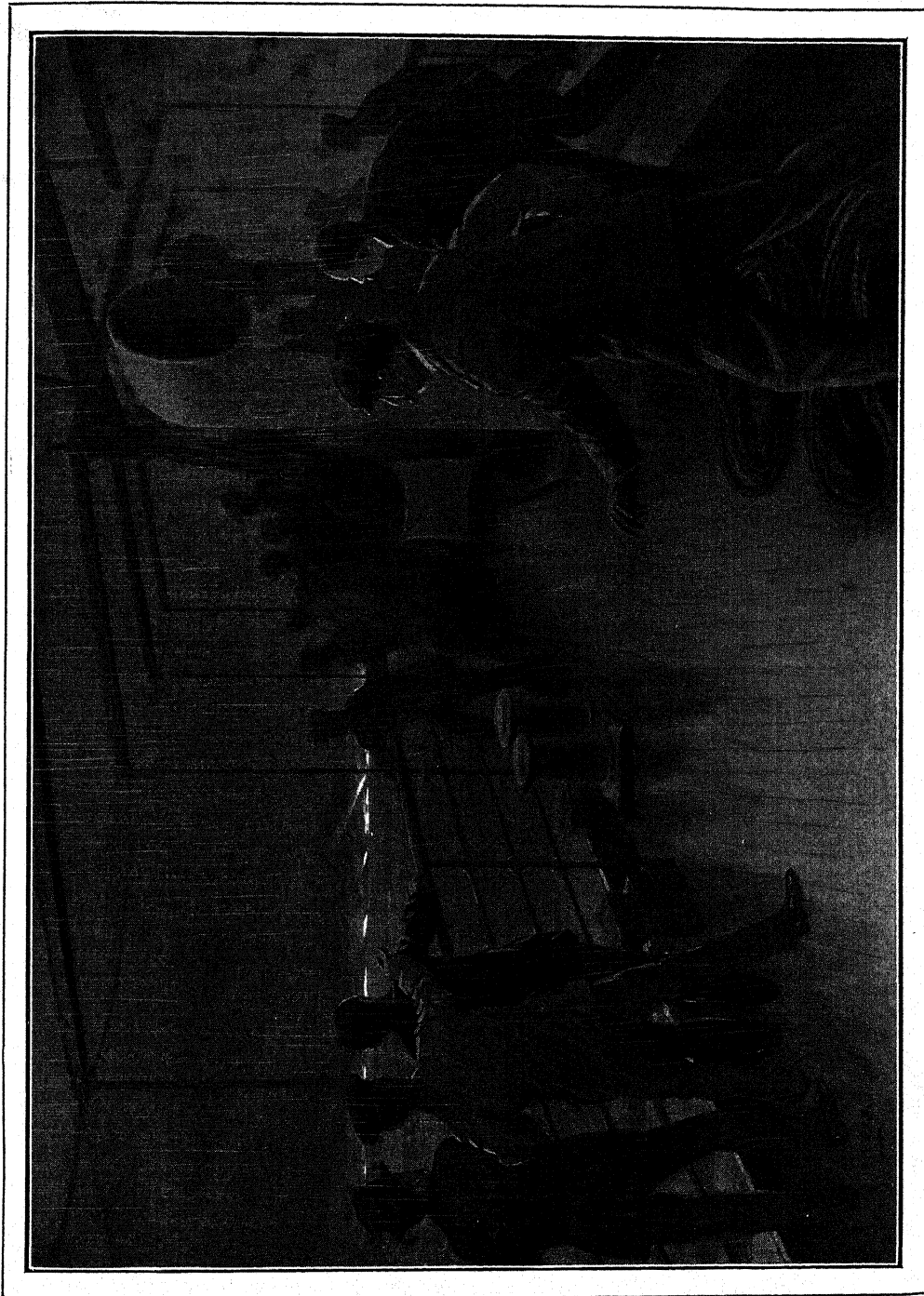
The *Tsarevitch* may justly claim to have

borne the brunt of the fighting in this great battle. During the action her decks are said to have been slippery with blood, and she had three officers killed besides Admiral Vitoft, and eight officers wounded, including Admiral Matussevitch, who speaks highly of the unexampled bravery of both officers and men. Altogether the *Tsarevitch* lost fifteen killed and forty-five wounded.

The *Tsarevitch* reaches Kiao-chau at 9 o'clock in the evening of August 11th, and finds there the cruiser *Novik* and the destroyer *Beschumni*. These had arrived between 4 and 5 p.m., the *Novik* slightly damaged, but with no dead aboard, and the destroyer pretty badly knocked about. Later, two more destroyers seek this post of refuge, which is guarded by a German squadron of four cruisers and two gunboats.

Returning to the *Askold*, which we left showing its heels to the pursuing Japanese cruisers, we learn that Admiral Reitzenstein, noting that the chase was being abandoned, slowed down to wait for the other ships of his squadron. How she has contrived to make the speed she has is remarkable, considering the damage she has sustained. It is estimated by Reuter's correspondent, who afterwards visited her in port, that the *Askold* must have been pierced by nearly 200 shells, and in another account it is stated that she was hit eighty times below the water-line, a signal testimony to the accuracy of the fire. The following description of the *Askold's* injuries is interesting as showing what punishment a modern warship can receive without going to the bottom:—"Her first and third funnels are riddled with machine-gun bullets, and the base of one funnel has been almost entirely blown away at the level of the deck by a big shell. The





TOGO AT WORK: A DISTANT GLIMPSE OF THE PORT ARTHUR FIGHTING.

*An exciting incident during the cruise of the "Manchu Maru" the vessel that, at the invitation of the Japanese Government, carried the Foreign Naval Attachés and the Newspaper Correspondents to Korean waters and ports.*

after-funnel has been cut in two and telescoped. Its remains are only held up by the guy ropes. An 8-in. armour-piercing shell entered the starboard side forward about two feet above the water-line, and lodged in a bunker. A 12-in. shell exploded in the starboard hammock netting amidships, the fragments riddling and destroying four metallic life-boats. Another similar shell entered the state-room of the starboard quarter and cut its way across the deck, exploding in the officers' quarter on the port side, and destroying everything *en route*. The deckhouse on the superstructure under the forward bridge was riddled by fragments of a shell, which exploded in the forward funnel. The vessel's search-lights are all damaged beyond repair. The torpedo netting was cut up by a shell, and is practically useless. In the ship's bottom there are several old and new injuries, one torpedo having made a big hole through the side into a bunker, which happily proved fairly watertight." It may be noted that with all this structural damage, the *Askold* has only eleven killed and forty-eight wounded, more than half of the latter having been but slightly injured. None the less, the ship has been right bravely fought, Admiral Reitzenstein drawing special attention to the heroism of the chaplain, who went from one part of the ship to another with a cross, giving his benediction to the men; while the doctors, under a hail of shells, removed the wounded to a place of safety.

Admiral Reitzenstein during the night is apparently joined by the *Novik* and the destroyer *Groszovoi*. The former he allows to act independently, and, as we have seen, she makes forthwith for Kiaochau. The *Askold* is for the present kept well out to sea in order to avoid torpedo

attacks from Shan-tung. At dawn an attempt is made to put on more speed, but it is found that the engines will not bear the strain, and accordingly the idea of proceeding to Vladivostok has to be abandoned. It is believed that on the night of the 11th the *Askold* and *Groszovoi* attempted to follow the *Novik* into Kiaochau Bay, but were headed off by a Japanese cruiser, and ultimately made for the neutral port of Shanghai, which was reached in the early morning of the 12th.

We have located every vessel of the dispersed Port Arthur Fleet with the solitary exception of one destroyer. For, according to Prince Ukhtomsky's official report, the battleships *Peresviet*, *Pobieda*, *Retvisan*, *Poltava*, and *Sevastopol*, the cruiser *Pallada*, and three destroyers out of eight were at Port Arthur; the battleship *Tsarevitch*, the cruiser *Novik*, and three destroyers are at Kiaochau; the cruiser *Diana* is at Saigon; and the cruiser *Askold* and one destroyer are at Shanghai. There remains one destroyer, the *Reshitelny*, which later becomes the centre of a very dramatic incident, to be related hereafter. For the present it is sufficient to say that, when on the night of the 11th the Japanese destroyers were let loose on the dispersed Russian Fleet, two of them, the *Asashio* and *Kasumi*, gave chase to the *Reshitelny* and, after losing her in the darkness, found that she had entered Chifu. The Japanese destroyers wait for a time outside the port, and here we may leave them in order to pay a visit to the victorious Japanese squadron, which has thus so unceremoniously dispersed one of the most powerful fleets ever collected in Far Eastern waters.

In comparison with the injuries sustained by the Russian ships those of the

Japanese squadron are slight. Admiral Togo specially reports, on the forenoon of August 12th, "Our ships suffered no serious damage, and are fit to resume their places in the line of battle. Our total casualties were 170 of all ranks." Later returns give the casualty list as follows: In the *Mikasa*—killed, 4 officers and 29 men; severely wounded, 6 officers and 29 men; slightly wounded, 4 officers and 49 men. In the *Yakumo*—killed, 1 officer and 11 men; wounded, 10 men. In the *Nisshin*—killed, 7 officers and 9 men; wounded, 2 officers and 15 men. In the *Kasuga*—10 men wounded. In the *Asagiri*—2 men killed. In Torpedo-boat No. 38—1 man killed and 8 wounded. Commander his Imperial Highness Prince Kwacho was slightly wounded on board Admiral Togo's flagship.

It is, perhaps, almost more by the insignificance of these injuries and casualties that the greatness of Admiral Togo's victory will eventually have to be judged than by the damage he has succeeded in inflicting on the Russian ships. It is possible that if he had been in a position to display a little greater recklessness the results would have been much more striking. One of the most obvious things about this battle is that the fighting was confined almost entirely to the battleships, and in these at the commencement the numerical superiority lay with the Russians, for of course the old *Tsin-yen* does not count. It is true that the *Nisshin* and *Kasuga* appear to have been fought as small battleships, which to all intents and purposes they are; but the fact still remains, that with better shooting it might have been quite possible for the Russians at the outset to have so disabled some of their larger adversaries that a subsequent junction with the Vladivostok Squadron would

have been easily practicable. It behoved Admiral Togo, then, to be extremely careful not to allow the superiority which the efficiency of his ships and the splendid training of his officers and men gave him to pass from him at an early stage of the engagement.

The caution exhibited by the Japanese met with its reward. To be able to say, two days later, that all his ships were able to resume their places in the line of battle was something of which Admiral Togo might well be proud, and indicated perhaps as great a service as it was possible for him to render his country at this juncture. For if he had succeeded in still more completely crippling the Port Arthur Fleet at a corresponding loss to his own, a new set of risks would have come into operation which might ultimately have had to be very seriously considered by a country unable to procure fresh battleships and large cruisers until the end of the war. It must be remembered that at this time the Vladivostok Squadron was still in being; Port Arthur, although heavily pressed, was still in effective Russian occupation; and the sailing of the Russian Baltic Fleet, although a remote and rather shadowy contingency, would undoubtedly have been accelerated if it had transpired that another Japanese battleship or two, in addition to the ill-fated *Hatsuse*, had been permanently disabled by a few well-aimed 12-inch shells.

As things are, the blow which Admiral Togo has delivered is a staggering one. It is true that five out of the six battleships and one of the four cruisers have regained Port Arthur harbour, whence it is possible that, with the astonishing vitality possessed by Russian warships, they may emerge at no distant date apparently not very much the worse for

wear, in company, maybe, with the rejuvenated *Bayan*. But it must be remembered that the main reason why the Port Arthur Fleet went out on the morning of the 10th was because the harbour was getting too hot to hold them, and there is small likelihood that the fire from Wolf's Hill will now slacken. As to the remaining battleship and three cruisers,

Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Navy would, perhaps, have secured a heartier round of popular applause, even from his own countrymen, if he had gone in a little closer and sent two or three of the Russian battleships to the bottom, as he doubtless could have done had he chosen to take the risk. But his caution has been abundantly justified ; and it may

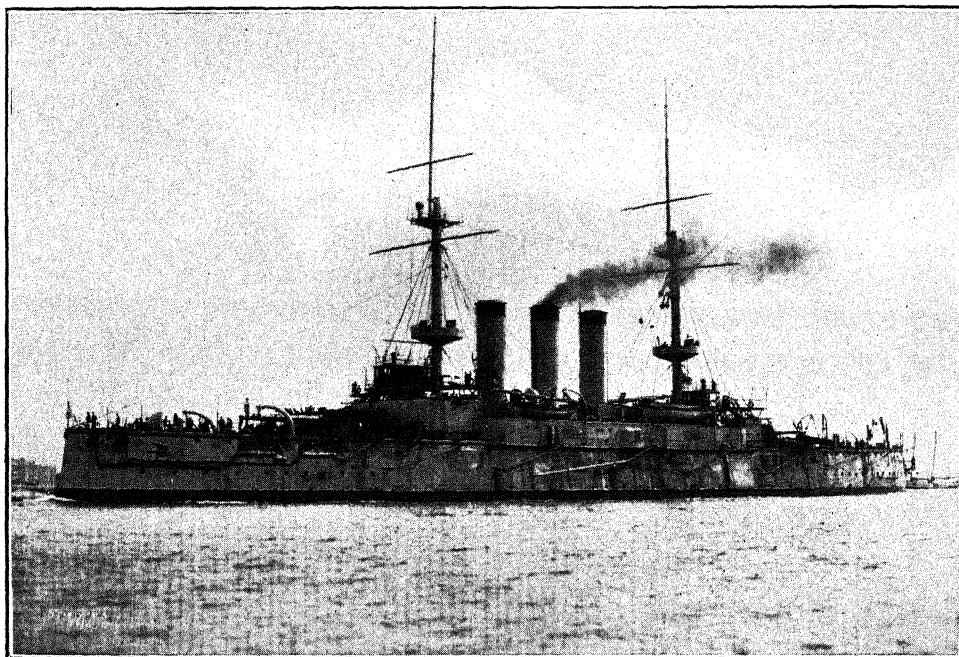


Photo : Symonds & Co., Portsmouth.

THE JAPANESE BATTLESHIP SHIKISHIMA.

one of the latter cannot yet be accounted for, and we may anticipate the future a little by saying that the *Tsarevitch*, *Askold*, *Diana*, and *Novik* will soon have to be regarded as *hors de combat*. Admiral Togo, then, has not only dispersed, disorganised, and to some extent demoralised his powerful adversary, but has weakened him very considerably in just those very factors of strength which are of paramount importance to the maintenance of Japan's naval superiority. The

be many a long day before another action at sea is fought between fleets on the whole by no means unequally matched, in which the victor will succeed in punishing the vanquished so seriously with such conspicuously little hurt to himself.

More detailed accounts of the battle may reveal interesting and instructive points on which fresh theories can be based, and in no case can it be expected that the full significance of such an epoch-making fight will dawn all at once

on even expert spectators at a distance. But for the present, two monumental facts stand out with singular clearness. One is, that where there are battleships, cruisers must be content to remain in the background, if they do not retire altogether; the other great lesson to be

all their own, although without them a naval action must soon become little more than a grim absurdity. But rapid and accurate fire means either the assertion of an immense and immediate superiority, or the levelling of many advantages possessed by the other side. A few well-



ADMIRAL VITOFT.

derived from this encounter of giants is that, more especially, perhaps, with battleships and 12-inch guns, superior gunnery is absolutely the first consideration. Speed is, of course, a valuable aid in forcing a battle upon an unwilling adversary, and at times it may play an all-important part in manoeuvring. Discipline and courage have a significance

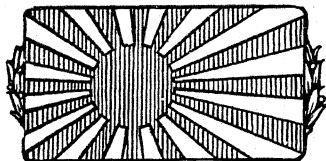
aimed shots produced both the disablement of the *Tsarevitch* and the complete derangement of the Russian line of battle. But it is in the handling of the biggest guns of all that the good practice must be made, if appreciable results are to be secured. The Japanese themselves may perhaps have taken to heart the fact that, while the riddling of the *Askold*

with nearly 200 shells is a strong evidence of notable marksmanship, an even more impressive result might have been attained by a tenth of the projectiles had they all come from 12-inch muzzles.

Closely related to the question of rapid and accurate practice is that of concentration of fire, a matter as to which Admiral Togo, in common with most up-to-date authorities, evidently holds strong views. It would seem that the *Tsarevitch* and *Retvisan* suffered particular injury from the concentrated fire of the Japanese battleships, and it can be readily understood that the effect of the simultaneous arrival of two or three winged messengers of destruction weighing not very far short of half a ton apiece must be terrific. The Russians, too, appear to have devoted a disproportionate amount of attention to the *Mikasa*. But, of course, concentrated fire requires to be accurate, and it is clear that in this respect the Russians were sadly inferior to their opponents.

Apart from such technical considerations, there is much in the conclusion of this great naval battle calculated to inspire grave and earnest reflection. In

a sense it is a decisive victory, for it has settled, at any rate for a long interval, the question of the capacity of the Port Arthur Fleet to dispute seriously the command of the sea with the Navy of Japan. Extraordinary credit is due to the Russians for the persistence with which, after repeated disasters, they patched up their ships and brought them out in fighting trim to do battle bravely with such a formidable antagonist. But the great collision has taken place, and Russia has been beaten—beaten and scattered beyond hope of re-union—and the disparity has been so increased that it seems hopeless to think that any comparison can ever again be made between the naval power of Russia in the Far East and that of Japan. Till this fleet action was fought a hundred things might have happened to qualify, if not to alter radically, the result. But the time is over for such uncertainties. The fight has been, as far as such a fight could be, to the finish, and, while the ships of Russia seek here and there an inglorious refuge, the morrow's dawn brings added and lasting glory to the Rising Sun of Japan.



## CHAPTER L.

KAMIMURA ON GUARD—THE VLADIVOSTOK SQUADRON SIGHTED—A CRUISER ACTION—  
DESPERATE FIGHTING—SINKING OF THE *RURIK*—JAPANESE HUMANITY—AT VLADI-  
VOSTOK—HOPES AND FEARS.

THE day breaks beautifully clear on August 14th, and Admiral Kamimura, who has been lying with a squadron of four cruisers off the southern coast of Korea, is not likely to let anything slip past him in conditions so favourable to the task he has in hand. Since the night of the 10th he has been aware of the sortie of the Port Arthur fleet, of Admiral Togo's victory, and of the dispersal of the Russian ships. He has been warned that some part of the scattered fleet will probably try to force the Tsu-shima Strait and make for Vladivostok, and that the Vladivostok Squadron will probably co-operate in this enterprise. Very alert, then, has Admiral Kamimura been these last three days, and possibly now he is beginning to fear lest once again ill-luck may be dogging his footsteps, and that once again the enemy's ships may have contrived to elude one of the smartest and keenest officers of the Japanese Navy.

The Admiral's flag is flying on the fine armoured cruiser *Idzumo* of 9,800 tons, which has a nominal speed of over 24 knots. In his squadron are the *Idzumo's* sister ship, the *Iwate*, which has on board Rear-Admiral Misu; the *Tokiwa*, which is the sister ship to the well-known *Asama*, and is of 9,750 tons, with a nominal speed of 21.5 knots; and the *Adzuma*, of 9,438 tons, with a nominal speed of 21 knots. Altogether,

a very powerful and homogeneous squadron, splendidly fitted not only for the purpose of patrolling a strait which heavily armed vessels of the enemy may attempt to force, but also for that of bringing any but battleships to book. For all are well armed with British guns supplied from Elswick, all have good armour protection, and the slowest has a very fair turn of speed.

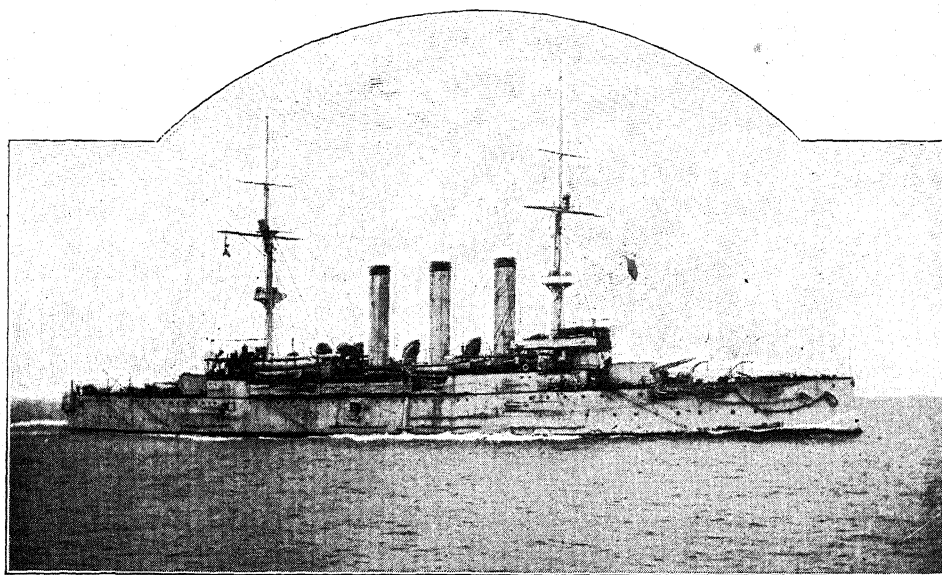
It is a little before 5 a.m., and the squadron is near Ul-san, which lies some thirty miles north-east of Fusan, when on the port bow a great and glorious sight is discerned. The three Vladivostok cruisers are seen steering south at a distance of 11,000 yards! Earnestly the Japanese pray that, at last, their vigilance will be rewarded, and that the squadron which has given such infinite trouble will not again escape. For a short time the Russian ships come on at full speed, evidently unconscious of the enemy's proximity; but soon they catch sight of the Japanese vessels, and, true to their old policy, they endeavour to get away. Putting about, the Russian Admiral makes a course to the north-east, with the object of reaching the open sea. The *Rossia* (12,200 tons, nominal speed 18 knots) is leading; the *Gromoboi* (12,336 tons, nominal speed 20 knots) follows; and the rear is brought up by the *Rurik* (10,940 tons, nominal speed 18 knots). The three ships steam



at their full speed, but evidently cannot, at first, make more than 15 or 16 knots, and the Japanese soon overtake them, holding a parallel course, and forcing the Russians to accept battle.

It is now 5.20 a.m. and the two squadrons are 8,750 yards apart. The Russians are still in single column line ahead, but the Japanese now adopt a

matched, for the numerical inferiority of the Russians is compensated by the fact that all the three Russian ships are considerably heavier than any in the Japanese squadron. On the other hand, the Japanese have a distinct superiority in speed, and in weight of broadside fire. But here again, as in the battleship action described in the last chapter, it is



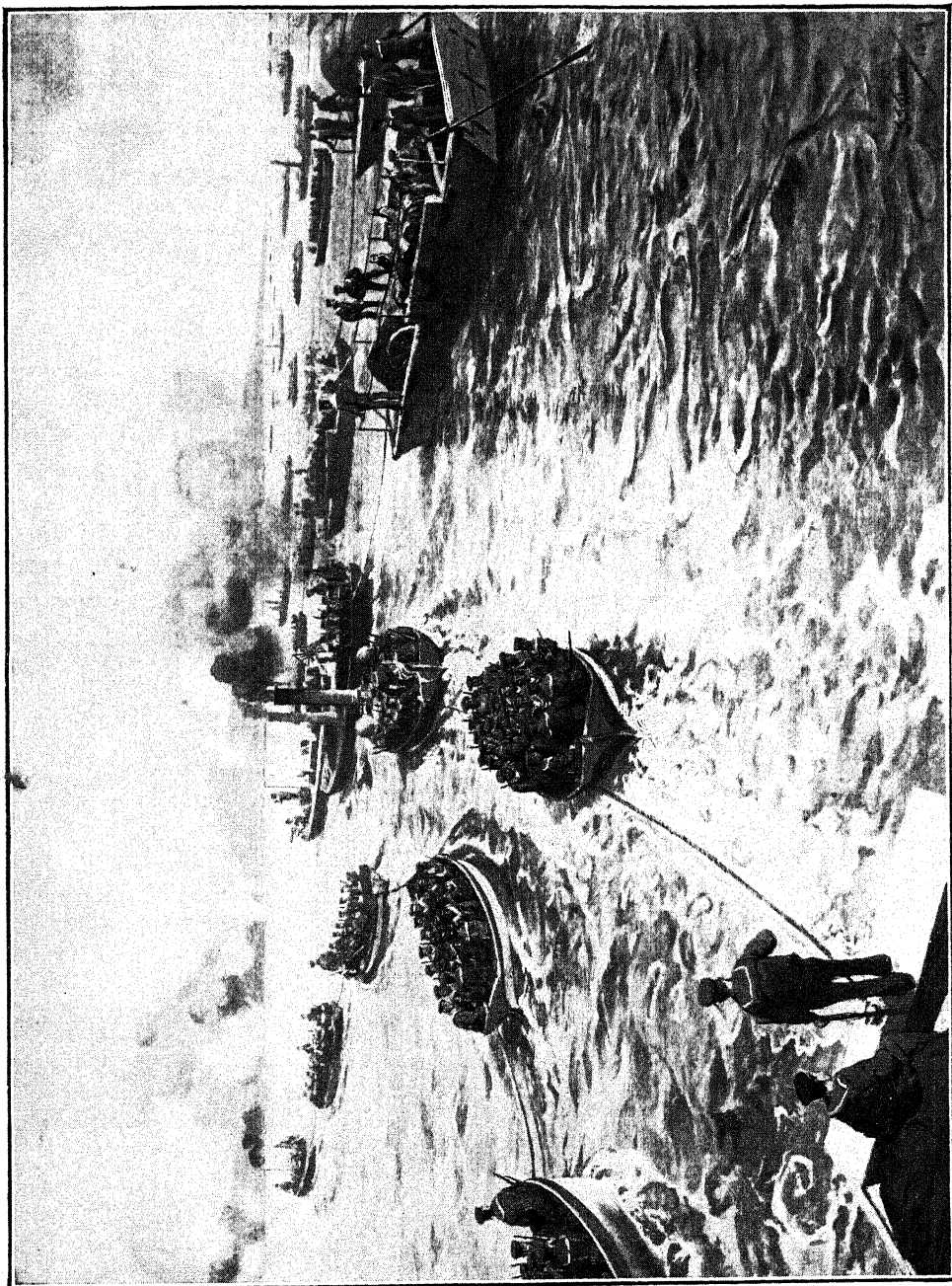
*From photo supplied by Sir W. G. Armstrong, Whitworth & Co., Ltd.*

JAPANESE CRUISER IDZUMA.

T-shaped formation, in which later they cross the enemy's course, raking his ships fore and aft, while these mask each other's fire. Further, Kamimura subsequently manœuvres to keep his back, as far as possible, to the sun, thereby giving his gunners a marked advantage.

The fight begins at 5.23—one can imagine Admiral Kamimura taking out his watch and noting the time with punctilious exactitude—and it is soon evident that the struggle will be a severe one. In point of strength the two squadrons are by no means unevenly

the accuracy of fire that eventually tells. The tactical advantage of speed is finely illustrated by the fact that Admiral Kamimura was enabled to force a battle on an enemy whose one idea was to escape it, and it must have largely assisted the manœuvring of the Japanese ships with a view to concentrating their fire, and hindering that of the Russians. But it is the constant hitting which enables Admiral Kamimura from the first to take a dominant part in the proceedings, and finally to emerge from them with an important little victory to his credit.



JAPANESE NAVAL BRIGADE LANDING UNDER FIRE AT PITSANI.

Repeatedly the Japanese projectiles take effect, and Admiral Jessen is beginning to realise that at last a day of reckoning has come for the valiant squadron which has hitherto waged such relentless war upon transports and unarmed merchantmen. He is still endeavouring to make for the open sea towards the north-east when, in the distance, he sees another Japanese warship coming up from the southern straits. This is the famous *Naniwa*, which took such a prominent part in the war with China, and which is now, consequently, no longer in her fighting prime. Still, she is a handy light cruiser of nearly 4,000 tons, and with a speed of about 17 knots. With her now is her sister ship, the *Takachiho*, the two belonging to what is known as the "Fourth Squadron," under command of Rear-Admiral Uriu.

Observing that the Russian squadron is trying to get away to the north-east, the *Naniwa* shapes its course with a view to preventing the execution of this manœuvre. "Consequently," says the Russian Admiral in his official despatch, "choosing a favourable moment, I turned sharply to the right and steamed towards the north-east, calculating that I should be able to turn northwards before I reached the Korean coast." There seems to be some error—possibly arising in the translation—as to the direction indicated, since it is difficult to see how the Korean coast could possibly have been reached in the circumstances on a north-easterly course. But if we read the despatch, "I turned sharply to the left and steamed towards the north-west," the manœuvre appears to become quite intelligible.

According to the Russian Admiral there seemed an excellent chance that the

manœuvre in question would succeed, for he had increased his speed to 17 knots, at which rate the Japanese might have had some difficulty in overtaking him. But in less than five minutes after the new movement commenced the *Rurik* leaves the line and hoists the alarming signal "Steering gear not working." She is told to steer by means of her engines, and to keep on in the course on which the *Rossia* and the *Gromoboi* are steaming; but she makes no response, having, indeed, a good deal at this unpropitious moment to occupy her attention.

For the Japanese soon take advantage of the *Rurik's* inferior speed, and, coming up swiftly, concentrate their fire on her at a range of 4,500 to 5,500 yards.

The Russian Admiral, observing the *Rurik's* plight, immediately checks his retreat and does his best to redeem the unenviable reputation of his squadron for persistent anxiety to run away from danger. As he says, all his subsequent manœuvres have the sole object of affording the *Rurik* an opportunity of repairing her damaged gear, and the Japanese bear ready testimony to the devoted gallantry with which the *Rossia* and the *Gromoboi* endeavour to draw on themselves the whole of the Japanese fire.

The two big ships circle round their smaller comrade, and the fighting becomes fast and furious. The Japanese cruisers rake the enemy again and again, and the Russians reply with every available gun. But the sacrifice is to little purpose. The *Rurik* bursts into flames, and describes uneasy circles which show clearly that the injury to her steering gear is a deep-seated one. "I cannot steer," she signals pathetically, and again the *Rossia* and the *Gromoboi* manœuvre in front of her so as to give her an opportunity of retiring in the

direction of the Korean coast, now only two miles distant.

At 8 o'clock the Russian Admiral hoists the signal to make for Vladivostok. This is repeated by the *Rurik*, which follows in the wake of the *Rossia* and *Gromoboi* towards the north-west, apparently steaming at considerable speed, and only separated from the ship in front of her by about four miles.

The *Rossia* and *Gromoboi* have meanwhile sustained considerable damage. According to one account both have been repeatedly set on fire, flames pouring out from their port holes, and much confusion evidently being caused before the fires can be extinguished. On board the *Rossia* three of the boilers are reported by the Admiral to have been rendered useless at this stage.

At 8.30 the end of the unfortunate *Rurik* is not far off. She has been fighting all the time with the Japanese cruisers, who have been holding a parallel course and pouring in well-aimed shells at a range of about 5,000 yards. She now begins to lag very much behind, and to exhibit an ugly list to port. But her gallant crew never flag in serving their guns, until towards the last only two guns are left in action, and the ship, with her mizzenmast shot away, presents a truly battered condition.

At 9 a.m. the *Rossia* and the *Gromoboi* note that the *Rurik* has been engaged by the two light cruisers of the Fourth Squadron, the *Naniwa* and *Takachiho*, and shortly afterwards she is lost to sight. This enables Admiral Kamimura to follow the *Rossia* and *Gromoboi* with all his four armoured cruisers, and in the circumstances Admiral Jessen can hardly be blamed for his abandonment of the *Rurik*. His hope is that the latter may beat off her two opponents and, in spite

of the damage she has sustained, may be able to reach Vladivostok under her own steam. In view of the splendid fight he has already made, and the manner in which he has exposed his two remaining ships in order to cover the *Rurik*, it will be a captious critic indeed who finds fault with Admiral Jessen for a decision which cannot but have cost him a bitter pang.

In any case, his own position is sufficiently serious. Shortly before 10 o'clock the Japanese open a particularly deadly fire upon the *Gromoboi* and *Rossia*, and those in the latter feel sure that this is a prelude to an increase of speed with a view to a final attack. But, to the astonishment of the Russians, something quite different happens. The whole Japanese squadron bears away, the ships turning to the right in succession and ceasing fire.

The action of Admiral Kamimura in abandoning a pursuit which if continued might have enabled him to sink both the remaining ships of the Vladivostok Squadron, has been much criticised. The only explanation seems to be that the *Gromoboi* and *Rossia* were still steaming at great speed, and gave their pursuers the idea that although their hulls and armament were severely injured their engines were working satisfactorily, and that it would be hopeless to attempt to overtake them. It may be, too, that, in conjunction with this estimate, Admiral Kamimura took into consideration the chance that the *Rurik* might still succeed in beating off the *Naniwa* and *Takachiho*. The bare possibility of the *Rurik's* escape would be most seriously distasteful, for the Japanese have a strong sentimental grudge against this particular vessel, apart from her co-operation in the feats of the Vladivostok Squadron. For, as the Tokio Correspondent of the *Standard*

points out, the *Rurik* was the flagship of the Russian Squadron ten years ago on the historic occasion when the combined Russian, German, and French Fleet demonstrated in the Gulf of Pe-chi-li in support of the joint intervention which forced Japan to relinquish Port Arthur, her legitimate prize of war.

Whatever may have been at the back of Kamimura's mind when he abandons the pursuit of the *Rossia* and *Gromoboi*, there is no questioning the relief which the Russians experience at getting rid of their pursuers. Immediately after the Japanese cruisers have put about, Admiral Jessen proceeds to ascertain the losses and damage sustained by his ships, in the vague hope that it may still be

in the *Rossia* eleven holes have been made below the waterline, and in the *Gromoboi* six. The losses of officers in the two cruisers exceed half their total number, while those of the men amount to 25 per cent. of the entire strength. In these circumstances it is manifestly impossible to renew the conflict. Accordingly, advantage is taken of the calm weather to repair the more serious breaches, and in due course the squadron proceeds mournfully to Vladivostok.

Let us now leave the *Gromoboi* and *Rossia* and return to the unfortunate *Rurik*, which, dealing now with the *Naniwa* and *Takachiho*, renews the fight with splendid gallantry. But she is too far gone to maintain any but a brief and

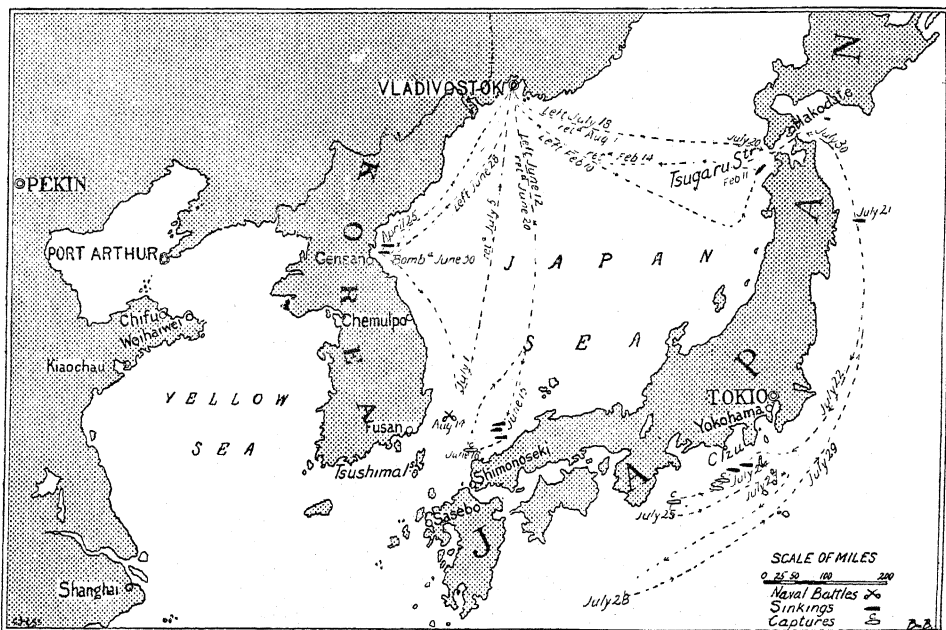


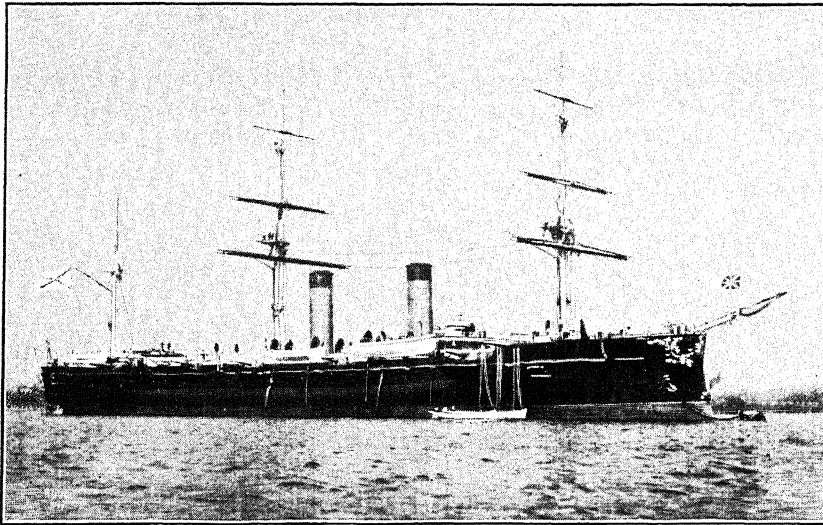
CHART OF THE VLADIVOSTOK RAIDS UP TO THE SINKING OF THE *RURIK*.

possible to renew the fight by returning to the spot, now thirty miles to the south, at which the squadron had parted company from the *Rurik*. It is found that

feeble resistance. Gradually she sinks, and with touching solicitude the sailors hasten to place their wounded comrades on planks and lower them into the sea,

so that they may have a chance of drifting away before the end comes. Almost to the very last the guns are fired. Finally the *Rurik* "stands up," that is, her

his ships, too, lower their boats, and a splendid record of life-saving work is accomplished. Indeed, in their anxiety to rescue their gallant foes the Japanese



THE RUSSIAN CRUISER RURIK.

bows rise into the air, and she goes down by the stern, eleven thousand tons of steel, and in her day one of the best-known and most formidable fighting machines afloat. For the past few hours she must have been a hell to those on board, for her construction favoured the outbreak of fire, and the flames are known to have been raging furiously through the doomed vessel from a comparatively early stage of the fight.

The sea is now strewn with planks and hammocks, to which hundreds of Russians are clinging. With ready humanity the *Naniwa* and *Takachiho* lower their boats in order to save life, and a torpedo-boat flotilla, which has just arrived, lends its assistance.

Meanwhile, Admiral Kamimura has returned from his chase of the *Rossia* and *Gromoboi*, and, seeing the state of affairs,

bluejackets dangerously overload many of their boats, one of which returns to its ship with 52 Russian sailors on board. Altogether, the official list of those saved includes 16 officers, of whom seven were wounded, one priest, four warrant officers, of whom three were wounded, and 592 sailors, of whom 166 were wounded. The survivors stated that the Captain, Commander, and most of the officers of the *Rurik* were killed during the battle.

The Japanese regard the rescue of the *Rurik's* sailors with peculiar satisfaction. On the morrow of the fight a prominent official remarked to the Kobe Correspondent of the *Daily Express*, "Japan has avenged the *Hitachi Maru*. The men Kamimura rescued and succoured yesterday aided in the sinking of the *Hitachi Maru*, and sailed away from a hundred



of their drowning victims. We offer their living for our dead."

The Japanese loss and damage in this remarkable engagement were very small. Admiral Kamimura reported that his ships "suffered somewhat, but nothing serious," and there is other evidence to show that their fighting power was unimpaired. The Japanese casualties were 44 killed, including two officers, and 65 wounded, including seven officers.

Before we proceed to discuss the lessons and results of this brisk naval engagement let us take a parting glance at the *Rossia* and *Gromoboi*, as they steam slowly towards Vladivostok. It is a melancholy crowd of officials and civilians which lines the water-front of the great northern port when the two returning cruisers are sighted. For the fate of the *Rurik* is known, and by this time the magnitude of the disaster which has resulted from the naval sortie from Port Arthur is realised. What a different home-coming from that which might have been had even a portion of the Port Arthur Fleet succeeded in breaking through the Japanese blockade and effected a junction with Admiral Jessen's three ships, now reduced to a wretched pair! What a miserable ending to the "commerce-destroying" exploits of which Vladivostok has been so proud, possibly because they have, at any rate, served to draw her from the obscure position to which she had been relegated during the early stages of the war by the studied indifference of Japan! One can hardly imagine a more complete upsetting of calculations, a cruder wrecking of hopes, than this, which the Russian residents of the "Sovereign City of the East" are now undergoing.

An eye-witness gives a graphic account of the depressing spectacle afforded by

the two cruisers themselves as they make their way gloomily into the Golden Horn. They never seem previously to have presented a particularly spick-and-span appearance, but they always gave the idea of being powerful and efficient fighting ships, and now even this grimly attractive aspect has given place to one of rather woebegone forlornness. Funnels, masts, and bridges have been riddled with shells. "Iron plates, temporarily riveted over breaches made by the enemy, fairly covered the hulls of both ships"—giving them, one would imagine, rather the appearance of wounded elephants with their hurts hidden by gigantic squares of court-plaster. "Some of these breaches," it is stated, "were large enough for a man to creep through." There are other signs of heavy fighting to be seen, and, as a fillip to the human interest of a dreary scene, a figure lies prone under an awning on the quarter-deck of the *Gromoboi*, the figure of a badly wounded officer, Captain Dabitch, the commander of the cruiser, who was twice hit during the action, but clung to his post till it was over.

There are inspiring stories told of Captain Dabitch's behaviour. He took his stand on the upper bridge of the *Gromoboi* and remained there until he was wounded. As soon as his wound had been treated he again assumed command, and again mounted the bridge. Another shell almost immediately burst on the *Gromoboi*, killing several officers and again wounding the captain. Captain Dabitch had now to send his own signals to the engine-room, for no officer was available for the duty. A little later, thinking his gallant fellows wanted heartening, he himself, in spite of his second wound, and weak as he was from loss of blood, came down on deck and showed



himself among the sailors, saying, "You see, men, I'm all right."

There are similar stories told of the gallant captain of the *Rossia*, who at one period of the fight was informed that out of twenty guns only three were workable. He then calmly ordered the torpedo lieutenant to have everything in readiness to send the ship to the bottom. "His coolness and good spirits never wavered."

From these bright tales of Russian gallantry we must now turn to make a few very brief comments on the general aspects of this cruiser engagement. There is really very little to say beyond what has been said already as to the supreme value of accurate gunnery, and the extent to which this levels other considerations when once a naval action has become inevitable. In this particular case it will have been noticed that accurate fire, in a sense, takes the place of speed. It seems quite possible that, if the *Rurik* had been able to maintain the 17 knots at which she was steaming at one period of the fight, the Russian ships might have got away without much injury. But the straight powder of the Japanese soon knocked the *Rurik's* speed out of her, and, by rendering her helpless, placed the *Gromoboi* and *Rossia* also at a disadvantage. That this action, following on that of August 10th, will give a great impetus to the study and practice of naval gunnery, there can be little doubt. It is possible that, even in the greatest navies of the world there may be exhibited a more frequent tendency to practise with full charges, and perhaps a little less reluctance to subordinate gunnery needs to the exigencies of man-of-war smartness.

As to the manœuvring, here, as in the case of the battleship action of the 10th,

there may be technical lessons to be derived from the full details which will ultimately, no doubt, be available. But naval tactics are for the most part either so simple as to require no explanation, or so dependent upon data, which few but genuine naval experts understand, as to be beyond the scope of useful discussion in a work of this description. For the present, then, at any rate, let us be content with the assurance that Admiral Kamimura's victory was mainly due to accuracy of fire, and that it would probably have been just three times as decisive as it was had he known as much as we know now of the condition of the Russian ships.

Of the moral effects of the success it is easy to speak with greater confidence. Although the snake has not been killed, he has been badly scotched, and there does not seem much likelihood that ever again will a "Vladivostok Squadron" become such a terror, or rather, such a pestilential nuisance, as did the one which has just been so roughly handled. Even assuming that the big holes in the hulls of the *Gromoboi* and *Rossia* can be satisfactorily patched, and their other defects made good, they will undoubtedly be more cautious now in venturing forth in order to waylay innocent merchantmen, causing intense irritation among neutral maritime nations by their high-handed exposition of their own laws of contraband. There is a grave difference between hunting in couples and hunting in threes in such a case, more especially now that more Japanese armoured cruisers can be spared for the express purpose of preventing and punishing any raids from Vladivostok.

In this connection it may be mentioned that, in thanking Admiral Kamimura for the great service he has rendered, the

Mikado takes occasion to dwell specially on the fact that hitherto it has been the Admiral's sole duty to guard the Korean Strait. This is understood to be intended as a rebuke to the previous criticism which has been lavished upon Admiral Kamimura for not preventing the sorties of the Vladivostok Squadron.

As a matter of fact, it may well be that, with the loss of the *Rurik* and the hammering of the *Rossia* and *Gromoboi*, a new era has commenced for Vladivostok. Sooner or later the Japanese should have to take into serious consideration the desirableness of reducing this place, and much of the naval difficulty has now been removed. Little more than a fortnight after Admiral Kamimura's victory the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Echo de Paris* declares that the Japanese are about to attempt to seize the island of Sakhalin, in order to make it a base for operations against Vladivostok. The correspondent adds that General Linievitch has already sent troops to the island, and will shortly despatch reinforcements thither. This may be an altogether premature surmise, but, at any rate, it shows that the Russians themselves are alive to the altered situation.

It may incidentally be mentioned that about this time Admiral Alexeieff pays a visit to Vladivostok, with the intention, it is said, of conferring with General Linievitch as to the formation of a new

army to operate independently of that under command of General Kuropatkin. Here, again, we seem to be in the region rather of shadowy contingencies than of practical politics, taking into consideration the carrying capacity of the Siberian Railway. But the suggestion is instructive, partly as indicating that the antagonism between Alexeieff and Kuropatkin still continues unabated, and partly as a proof of the Viceroy's possession of a very pronounced never-say-die quality, which cannot but extort admiration, even where it fails to command respect. Apart from this, there is something rather sad in the apparent fact that Alexeieff is beginning to look upon Vladivostok as a last resort. Port Arthur, the Port Arthur which is intimately associated with the Viceroy's assertion of himself and his great office, still holds out, but it is beyond hope of relief by land or sea. Mukden is now being menaced by the advance of the combined armies of Japan upon General Kuropatkin's position at Liao-yang. Before a final withdrawal to Harbin takes place Admiral Alexeieff evidently thinks that advantage can be taken of the comparative immunity from attack which Vladivostok has hitherto enjoyed. It is not unlikely that his visit there is the prelude to some strenuous and interesting endeavours, if not to some dramatic results.

## CHAPTER LI.

SEQUEL TO THE NAVAL SORTIE FROM PORT ARTHUR—CAPTURE OF THE *RESHITELNY*—  
ANGRY PROTESTS — JAPAN'S JUSTIFICATION — REFUGEE SHIPS AT KIAO-CHAU,  
SHANGHAI, AND SAIGON—DISARMAMENT.

THE dispersal of the Russian Fleet after its sortie from Port Arthur on the memorable August 10th has a strangely variegated sequel. Some of the ships, as has already been noted, have found their way back to the harbour whence they emerged on that fateful morning, while others have sought refuge in no fewer than four different ports, Chifu, Kiao-chau, Shanghai, and Saigon. These last especially meet with curious experiences in circumstances of very great interest from an international standpoint. But before we proceed to follow their respective adventures, a few words must be given to the bulk of the defeated squadron which, under Prince Ukhtomsky, succeeded on the night of August 11th in regaining the doubtful shelter of Port Arthur. The ships in question were, it will be remembered, the battleships *Peresviet*, *Pobieda*, *Sevastopol*, *Retvisan*, and *Poltava*, and the cruiser *Pallada*. Most of these were known to have suffered considerably during the action, but the Russians are so skilful and industrious in repairing their damaged warships—not to speak of the wide experience they have recently had in this melancholy direction—that it will not be surprising if at no distant date the majority of the vessels named are again to be encountered outside the harbour, in company with the cruiser *Bayan*, which could not join in the sortie owing to a recent "accident."

But it soon becomes evident that Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky is to receive little credit for having brought this considerable remnant of the Fleet out of action. In Russia great indignation is expressed at his failure to carry out the Tsar's behest to remove the ships at all costs from Port Arthur to Vladivostok, and the opinion is freely ventilated that he altogether failed to realise the responsibilities which devolved upon him on the death of Admiral Vitof. There is no question that great results were expected to follow the escape of even part of the main fleet to Vladivostok, and that the return of five battleships and a cruiser to the shell-swept harbour of Port Arthur, followed by the defeat of the Vladivostok Squadron and the loss of the *Rurik*, has impressed the Russians perhaps more disagreeably than any previous naval incident of the war. Accordingly, it is hardly to be wondered at that, in spite of his important connections, Prince Ukhtomsky should be immediately deprived of his command, with a view, it is said, to his trial by court martial. A little later Captain Wiren, commanding the cruiser *Bayan*, is appointed to take Prince Ukhtomsky's place, with the rank of Rear-Admiral Commanding the Port Arthur Squadron.

We may now pass to an incident which, although it only affects the fate of a single Russian destroyer, is of more dramatic, and, indeed, to some extent,

of greater historical interest than even the return of the greater portion of the Port Arthur Fleet to its original base. This is the capture of the *Reshitelny* in the harbour of Chifu, an important Chinese port situated at the entrance to the Gulf of Pe-chi-li about 80 miles nearly due south of Port Arthur. Some allusion has already been made to Chifu as a hotbed of doubtful rumours. It may be added, that the place contains some 50,000 Chinamen and a fair sprinkling of foreign residents. There is reason to believe that, apart from the blockade-runners, a pretty constant communication has been kept up between Port Arthur and the Russian Consulate at Chifu by means of a system of wireless telegraphy, a receiving pole in connection with which is said to have been set up in the Consulate grounds in defiance of Japan's protest against what seems a clear violation of China's neutrality.

In Chapter XLIX. we left two Japanese destroyers waiting outside Chifu for the re-appearance of the *Reshitelny*, which was known to have taken refuge here. It appears that the Russian destroyer, having effected its escape after the action of August 10th, arrived at Chifu with important despatches and, it is said, with several personages on board disguised as engineers. According to the account given by the commander of the destroyer, Lieutenant Rostachakovski, the ship was forthwith disarmed, the breech-blocks of the guns and rifles being handed over to the Chinese Admiral at the port, and the ensign and pennant lowered.

The Japanese official reports say that the destroyers *Asashio* and *Kasumi*, having waited till nightfall on August 11th for the *Reshitelny* to come out, entered the harbour and found the Russian vessel not yet disarmed. Ac-

cordingly, Lieutenant Terashima, with an interpreter and a party of Japanese blue-jackets, was sent on board the *Reshitelny* to offer the commander the alternative of surrender or departure from the port at dawn.

A very graphic description of what follows is given by Reuter's correspondent at Chifu. It appears that when the Japanese lieutenant boarded the *Reshitelny*, followed by his boat's crew armed with rifles and bayonets, the Russian commander protested. "I am unable to resist," he said, "but this is a breach of neutrality and courtesy." He then gave secret orders for preparations to be made to blow up the ship. In order to gain time for this operation, Lieutenant Rostachakovski proceeded to argue the points of international law bearing on the case, being met by vigorous injunctions either to get out into the open sea for a fight or prepare to be towed out. The Japanese officer added that, if Lieutenant Rostachakovski would surrender, his life would be spared.

"This insult so stung me," said the Russian officer afterwards, "that I struck the Japanese officer before I meant to, as I was afraid that the explosive for blowing up my ship was not yet ready. My blow knocked the Japanese lieutenant overboard. In falling he dragged me with him, he dropping into his boat, I into the water. I clung to the lieutenant's throat, pummelling him till my hold was broken."

Lieutenant Rostachakovski subsequently attempted to return to his ship, but was shot at while in the water and wounded in the leg. He then swam to a neighbouring junk, whose crew beat him off with a boathook. He is said to have remained in the water fifty minutes, swimming, though hampered by his

wounds, till he was picked up by a boat from the Chinese warship *Hai-yung*.

Meanwhile, a free fight had commenced between the Russian and Japanese sailors. One of the former jumped overboard with the Japanese interpreter, and the confusion was intensified by the explosion of the *Reshitelny's* magazine causing several casualties. Eventually the Japanese got the upper hand, hoisted their flag, and one of their destroyers towed the *Reshitelny* out of the harbour.

The Japanese lost one man killed and fourteen wounded in this affair, which, as witnessed from the deck of the *Chifu* lightship, is said to have been of a very picturesque description. The Japanese destroyers had their search-lights turned on the *Reshitelny*, and one could see plainly the altercation between the Russian and Japanese lieutenants, followed by the discharge of rifles, the flash of cutlasses, and the springing of the Russians overboard. The actual fighting lasted only ten minutes, when the magazine explosion took place, blowing away the main bridge, but not damaging the hull.

There is some mystery as to the Russian despatches carried on board the *Reshitelny*. According to one account, some secret papers were burned before the Japanese boarded the vessel; according to another, they fell into the hands of the captors. But it is understood that Lieutenant Rostachakovski's mission was an important one, and that the capture of the ship was a serious blow to the Russian plans.

The reports as to the action of the Chinese naval authorities during this startling performance are very conflicting; one indicating complete non-interference, another alleging complicity with the Japanese, and a third suggesting that

the Chinese Admiral did make serious protests, but, finding them disregarded, was so deeply hurt that he handed over the command of his squadron to one of his captains! But the main point seems to be that, whether China did or did not wish to take active steps to prevent the violation of her neutrality, her attitude made no practical difference in the result.

At first the capture of the *Reshitelny* created a tremendous hubbub. The Russian Government protested both in Peking and, through the French Minister, in Tokio that the capture was an "astounding violation" of Chinese neutrality and of international law. In the Russian note to the Chinese Government complicity was distinctly charged, and the Chinese naval authorities accused of either cowardice or treason. A full explanation was demanded, also the punishment of the Chinese Admiral, and the restoration of the destroyer. At Peking the Russian demands are said to have been supported by the French and German Ministers.

Even in Great Britain Japan was at first pretty roundly blamed for having, in this case, departed from her usual attitude of strict correctness in regard to neutrality. In a word, an international situation of some gravity seemed to have been created, when Japan issued a remarkably clear and dignified statement defining her position both in regard to this particular incident and to Chinese neutrality in general. The following is a reproduction of the greater part of this extremely interesting and important communication, which was first made through Reuter's correspondent at Tokio. The Japanese Government begins by declaring the status of China in the present struggle to be quite unique. She is not a party to a conflict, most of the military

operations connected with which are being carried on within her borders, and, accordingly, some of her territory is belligerent, while the rest remains neutral. In such an anomalous and contradictory state of affairs the only way of limiting the area of hostilities at the commencement of the war was for both Russia and Japan to regard the case as a special one, and to give their adhesion to a special understanding.

"In the interests of foreign intercourse and the general tranquillity of China, the Japanese Government agreed to respect the neutrality of China outside the

regions actually involved in war, provided that Russia made a similar agreement and carried it out in good faith. The Japanese Government considered that they were precluded by their engagement from occupying or using for warlike purposes of any kind the territory or ports of China outside the zone which was made the theatre of war, because it seemed to them that such occupation or use would convert places thus occupied or used from neutral to belligerent territory. Equally it seemed to them that any such occupation or use of neutral Chinese territory or ports by the Russian

forces would give effect to the proviso in the Japanese engagement, which would justify her in considering ports so occupied or used as belligerent. In other

words, the Japanese Government hold that China's neutrality is imperfect, and applicable only to those places which are not occupied by the armed forces of either belligerent, and Russia cannot escape the consequences of an unsuccessful war by moving her army or navy into those portions of China which have by arrangement been made conditionally neutral.

"From Port Arthur Russia sought in Chifu an asylum from

attack which her home port had ceased to afford her. In taking that step Russia was guilty of a breach of the neutrality of China as established by agreement between the belligerents, and Japan was fully justified in regarding the harbour of Chifu as belligerent so far as the incident in question is concerned. With the termination of the incident the neutrality of the port was revived. The action taken by Japan at Chifu was the direct and natural consequence of Russia's disregard of her engagement, but it was not alone in this matter, not alone at Chifu, that Russia



Photo: C. Cozens, Southsea.  
JAPANESE "SMALL-ARM MEN" OF THE BATTLESHIP  
ASAHI.

flagrantly violated China's neutrality and ignored her own engagement."

The Japanese Government here proceeds to instance the establishment of the system of wireless telegraphy between Port Arthur and the Russian consulate at Chifu. It also mentions the case of the Russian gunboat *Mandjur*, which at the beginning of the war remained at Shanghai for weeks after receiving formal notice to leave, and was only disarmed after protracted negotiations. Finally, the case is quoted of the *Askold* and the *Groszovoi*, now seeking refuge at Shanghai, to which allusion will be made

consent to Russian warships, as the result of a broken engagement and violated neutrality, finding unchallenged in the harbours of China a safe refuge from capture or destruction. The declaration concludes as follows:—

"The statement of the commander of the *Reshitelny* that his vessel was disarmed upon her arrival at Chifu is untrue. The vessel was fully armed and manned when visited by Lieutenant Terashima, but in any event her disarmament would not fulfil the requirements of the regulations concerning China's neutrality. It was, moreover,



Photo: C. Cozens, Southsea.

JAPANESE BLUEJACKETS: A TYPICAL GROUP ON BOARD THE ASAHI.

presently. The Japanese Government observes that it has no intention of disregarding China's neutrality as long as it is respected by Russia; but it cannot

for China, and not Russia, to decide whether the alternative of disarmament would be acceptable. It is suggested that the present case is comparable with



that of the *Florida*, among others, but the Japanese Government draw a clear distinction between the two events. The neutrality of Brazil was perfect and unconditional, and the port of Bahia was a long distance from the seat of war; whereas the neutrality of China is imperfect and conditional, and the port of Chifu is in close proximity to the zone of military operations. The Russian officers who took part in the Chifu incident agree that the *Reshitelny* was the aggressor and the first to begin the hostilities which resulted in her capture. This fact would, the Japanese Government believe, deprive Russia of any grounds for complaint which she might possess if the legality of the capture were otherwise in doubt. In this respect the case resembles the cases of the American privateer *General Armstrong* and of the British ship *Anne*.

"The case of the *Reshitelny* is in itself of trifling importance, but it involves a principle of paramount importance. Experience has shown that China will take no adequate steps to enforce her neutrality laws. If in these circumstances the *Reshitelny* could make Chifu harbour a port of refuge, then the great ships of the Russian Navy might do the same, and nothing would prevent these ships from issuing forth from their retreat to attack Japan. The necessity of guarding against such an eventuality was too commanding and too overwhelming to permit the *Reshitelny* to establish a precedent."

It is significant that after the publication of this weighty statement the *Reshitelny* incident seems to recede into the background, and we hear as little of Japan's "astounding violation of neutrality" as we now do of her "treachery" in attacking the Russian

ships at Port Arthur on the night of February 10th.

The next episode in connection with the dispersal of the Port Arthur Fleet is that of the battleship *Tsarevitch* and the three Russian destroyers in Kiao-chau Bay. The latter lies on the east coast of the Shantung province, and at its entrance is the important German port of Tsing-tau, where Germany has a control as absolute as is ours at Wei-hai-wei. Several German warships are in the harbour, and it is clear that the position may become at any moment inconveniently strained unless Germany takes far prompter steps than did China to vindicate her neutrality. This Germany is happily in a position to do, and does with a thoroughness which is regarded as quite satisfactory everywhere except possibly in Russia, where fantastic views of German friendliness are believed to have been entertained.

When the news of the arrival of the crippled Russian ships reaches Berlin, the authorities immediately transmit to the Governor of Kiao-chau, Naval Captain Truppel, the necessary instructions for the observation of the strict rules of neutrality. The Russian ships are to be accorded a period of grace, during which the repairs needful to ensure seaworthiness may be undertaken, and after the lapse of which the vessels are to be summoned to leave German territory within twenty-four hours. On the other hand, no work of any kind calculated to restore or increase the fighting efficiency of the Russian refugees is to be countenanced.

On August 15th it was stated that the *Tsarevitch* and the three Russian destroyers were in the hands of the local German Government for repairs, and that the Governor had made a formal visit to

the ships to demand the hauling down of the Russian flag pending the completion of repairs. On the approach of the Governor and his staff the crew of the *Tsarevitch* were at first alarmed, and seized their weapons; the excitement, however, being quickly allayed. On the day following the striking of the ensigns, the Russian ships were dismantled, it being evident that they would not be able to cope with the greatly superior Japanese force which was lying in wait outside the harbour. All the ammunition was removed and stored in the German magazine, and the guns rendered temporarily quite useless. The terms of *parole* obliged the Russian officers and sailors to remain at Tsing-tau until the end of the war. Meanwhile, every precaution was taken to prevent a repetition of the Chifu incident; a German cruiser remaining on guard outside the harbour, while an intimation is conveyed to the Japanese that any ship entering the harbour at night without lights will be fired upon.

On August 16th Admiral Ikadzuki with his staff arrived at Tsing-tau in a Japanese destroyer and called upon the Governor, who reassured him as to the complete dismantling of the Russian ships. The Admiral then left the harbour, duly saluted by the German warships, and the incident was evidently regarded as closed by all concerned. About three weeks later a correspondent accompanied several Italian naval officers over the *Tsarevitch*, and reported that, in addition to the injuries mentioned in Chapter XLIX., the battleship had two holes below the water-line, which, however, had been easily handled. The general impression made upon the visitors was that the ship was far from being *hors de combat*, and that she would have been capable of inflicting severe damage

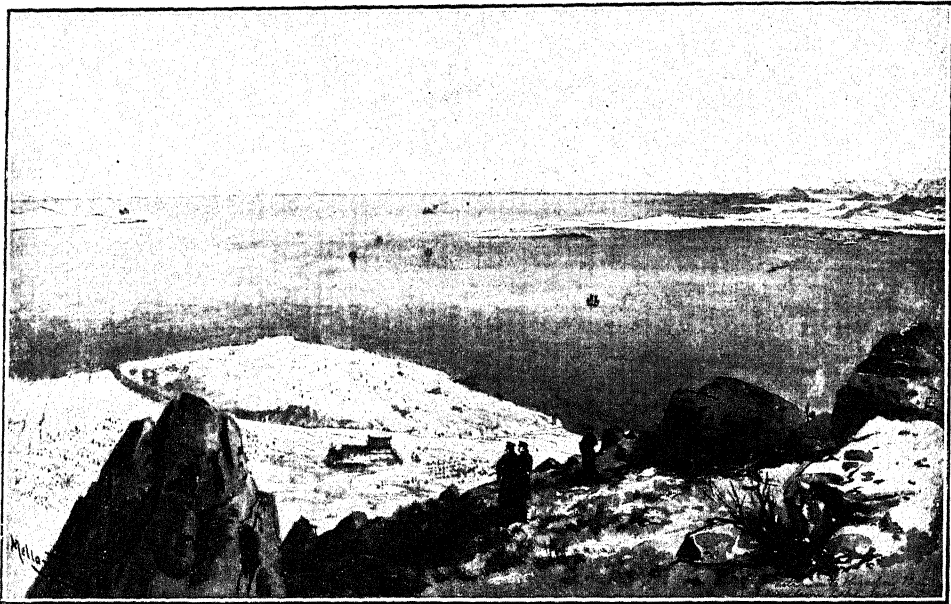
on the Japanese had she remained in the fight. She had plenty of ammunition and coal, and, though her electrical steering gear was gone, her hand and steam steering gear remained. On the other hand, it must be remembered that the *Tsarevitch* eventually parted company with the other ships because she could not keep up with them, and that when she arrived at Tsing-tau she was only making four knots with an immense expenditure of coal. Also, it is possible that the repairs effected in Kiao-chau Bay were considerable, for, even after the dismantling, the Russian sailors continued to work on the damaged vessel.

Before leaving Chifu and Kiao-chau a note may be made of the loss of a Russian torpedo-boat near Shan-tung in the early morning of August 12th. The boat in question was the *Burni*, commanded by Lieutenant Tyrtoff; but it is not quite certain that she was in the action of the 10th, since all the torpedo-craft which accompanied the Port Arthur Fleet in its sortie appear to be otherwise accounted for, three having returned to harbour, three being at Kiao-chau, one at Shanghai, and one, the *Reshitelny*, having been captured by the Japanese. An alternative suggestion is that the *Reshitelny* only emerged from Port Arthur after the action. The point, however, is not important, and mention is only made of the *Burni* because her crew sought refuge in a British port. The vessel went on the rocks near Shan-tung in a fog, and was blown up by order of her commander. Lieutenant Tyrtoff and his crew, all of whom were saved, made their way on foot to Wei-hai-wei, where they were accommodated on board H.M.S. *Humber*, and afterwards sent to Hong-kong.

There remain the case of the cruiser *Askold* and the destroyer *Groszovoi*, which

arrived at Shanghai on August 12th, and that of the cruiser *Diana* at Saigon. The position of the first two ships gave rise to a great deal of trouble, which at one time threatened to become acute, owing to fresh attempts on the part of Russia to take advantage of China's inability to enforce her neutrality. For several days a sort of "triangular duel" went on between the Russian, Chinese,

increase the fighting efficiency of the ships, such as, for instance, the provision of new funnels. The Chinese authorities met both Russian and Japanese demands with a series of diplomatic contortions, the practical result of which was, of course, that nothing was done except to produce a really dangerous state of tension. The situation was still further complicated by the fact that the



KIAO-CHAU BAY AND TSING-TAU.

and Japanese authorities. The Russians claimed the right to remain in the river until necessary repairs to the two ships had been effected, it being suggested that in the case of the *Grosvoi* this would occupy eighteen, and in that of the *Askold* twenty-eight, days. Japan vigorously demurred to this, pointing out that the only repairs contemplated by the laws of neutrality were those necessary to make a ship seaworthy, and that no work ought to be done of a nature likely to

dock in which the repairs to the *Askold* were being effected was in the hands of a British company not subject to Chinese jurisdiction.

After some ten days of very acrimonious negotiation it became evident that Japan would not allow herself to be trifled with much longer, and apprehensions were beginning to be felt that she would proceed forthwith to take the law into her own hands. At least, when the matter had apparently reached a climax,

an order from the Tsar arrived at Shanghai commanding Admiral Reitzenstein to disarm the *Askold* and *Groszovoi* without further delay. The flags of both vessels were accordingly lowered, and during the ensuing week the disarmament was duly carried out. Some further difficulty arose in respect of the crews of the two

ulates, namely, Chifu, Tien-tsin, Hankau, Shanghai, and Fu-chau.

The case of the cruiser *Diana*, which took refuge at the port of Saigon, the capital of the French colony of Indo-China, also remained a considerable time in abeyance, but seems never to have given rise to much anxiety. The *Diana*

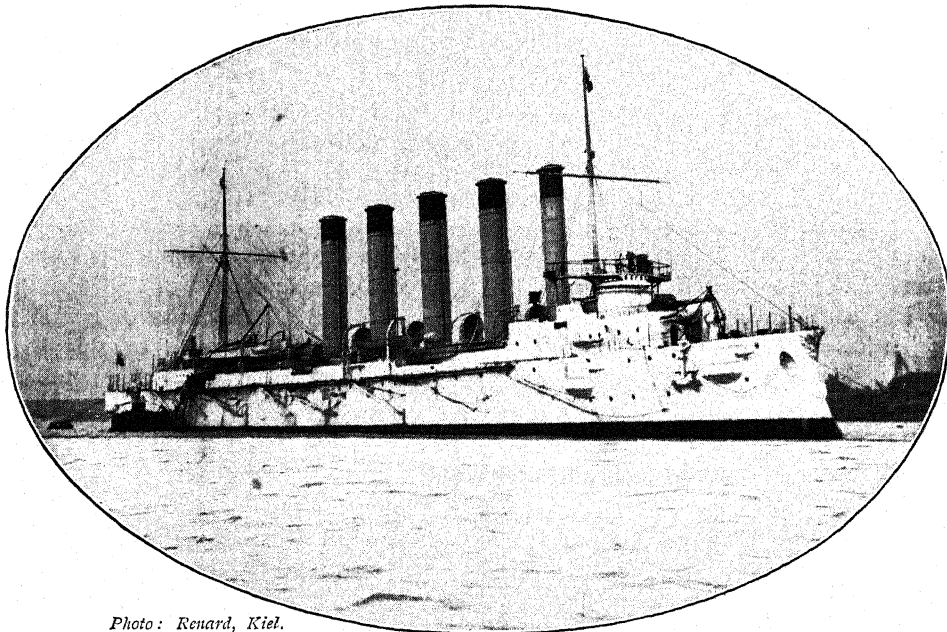


Photo: Renard, Kiel.

THE RUSSIAN CRUISER *ASKOLD*.

ships. Japan demanded that these should be "interned" until the war was ended, having been apprised of the fact that the crews of the *Varyag* and *Koriets*, who were sent home on *parole*, were now serving again with the Baltic Fleet. On the other hand, it was felt that the presence of such a large body of Russian sailors at Shanghai might lead to serious disturbances. Accordingly, it was ultimately decided to intern these crews, and distribute them among the Treaty Ports of China where there are Russian Con-

was damaged by a shell below the waterline in the action of August 10th, while another shell killed an officer and three men, and wounded twenty-three men. The *Diana* was making for Shan-tung, but was obliged to change her course, as she met some Japanese torpedo-boats, which are said to have discharged nine torpedoes at her without effect. According to the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Petit Parisien*, it was expected in the Russian capital that the *Diana*, after having undergone the necessary repairs,

would leave Saigon for the Red Sea "to assist the volunteer fleet vessels in their search for contraband of war"! But this ingenuous suggestion proved to be inaccurate. On September 4th the commander of the *Diana* received orders from the Russian Admiralty to disarm the vessel, and two days later the French Minister at Tokio formally notified the Japanese Government that the *Diana* would disarm at Saigon.

It has been necessary to follow this remarkable series of incidents rather closely, partly because the issues are somewhat complicated, but chiefly because the events themselves open up a new chapter in the history of warfare. As the Japanese Government has justly observed, the position of China in this war is altogether unique, and that the position has not long ago become utterly insupportable is, perhaps, the finest tribute to the good sense of the "looker-on" nations that could possibly be imagined. Even as it is, the behaviour of the Chinese authorities at Chifu and Shanghai has brought matters perilously near to the point at which China certainly, and perhaps three or four European nations, might have become suddenly embroiled. On the other hand, even the prompt and correct action of the Germans at Kiaochow hardly removes the impression that the international law of neutrality as regards the rights of refugee warships is not in an altogether satisfactory state. At present, everything seems to depend upon the capacity of the nation whose neutrality is thus affected to maintain that neutrality, if necessary by force of arms. One suspects that if Kiaochow had belonged not to Germany but, say, to the tiny Republic of Andorra, Japan would have stood upon little ceremony, and would

have cut out the *Tsarevitch* just as she did the *Reshitelny*. Europe would have been profoundly shocked, but no European nation would care to declare war against Japan merely out of anxiety to keep Andorran neutrality inviolate.

Possibly, then, the incidents narrated in this chapter may have a significance all their own, in that they may lead up to new and much more binding international agreements as to refugee ships. For, at the bottom of much of the fuss and fury which have arisen lurks the distinct probability that Russia has been cynically using the uncertainty which prevails as to the treatment of refugee ships to assist her materially in her warlike operations. It is of no slight advantage to her to lock up a considerable portion of the Japanese Fleet in watching the exits of harbours in which crippled Russian warships are being more or less leisurely repaired. All this relieves the pressure on Port Arthur, and puts off the day of reckoning for Vladivostok. Probably Russia from the first had no intention of allowing the *Tsarevitch*, *Askold*, and *Diana* to leave their respective shelters; indeed, she might not have been displeased to see all her remaining ships in the Far East comfortably interned where there was a chance of recovering them at the end of the war. All this is highly detrimental to the interests of Japan, whose sole consolation is that, if she continues victorious, she may be able to make it a condition of peace that the ships now lying dismantled in Chinese ports shall be handed over to her, together with any found at Port Arthur or Vladivostok. Probably Japan would cheerfully relinquish such remote reversionary chances for the present satisfaction of dealing with the refugee ships at sea, or, at least, of seeing them promptly disarmed.

## CHAPTER LII.

THE *NOVIK*—HER FLIGHT TO SAKHALIN ISLAND—THE JAPANESE SEARCH—A CRUISER DUEL—THE *NOVIK* SUNK—A FAMOUS LITTLE SHIP—JAPANESE REAPPEAR AT KORSAKOVSK.

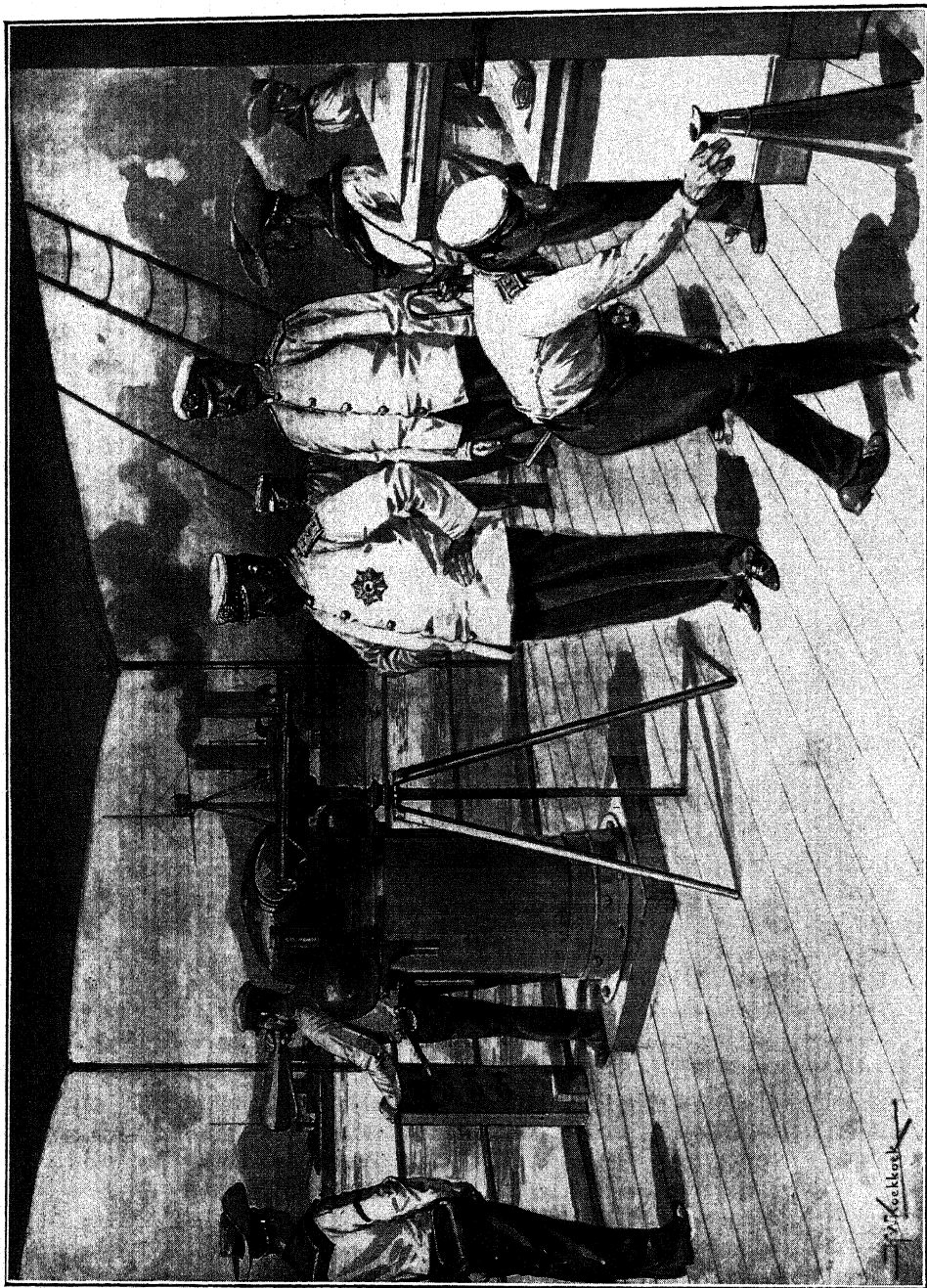
"THE cruiser *Novik*, which possesses a good turn of speed, was allowed to act independently." So wrote Rear-Admiral Reitzenstein, commanding the cruiser squadron of the Port Arthur Fleet, in the official report of the movements of his four ships on the night of the memorable battle of August 10th. The sequel to the independent action of the *Novik* is a sad one, but the story is relieved by many touches of real interest, and well deserves to be told in a separate chapter. For the *Novik* is a little ship with a big record, compiled in six short months, of sturdy fighting under conditions seldom favourable to a vessel of her class. Since February 9th, when she ran out of Port Arthur and boldly faced the bombarding fleet of Japan, but was soon crippled by her giant adversaries, she has been the "plucky little *Novik*" to all students of the campaign, and has won many a round of hearty applause from the friends of both the combatant nations. Her end is drawing near, but it is an end worthy of a gallant ship, and far less to be deplored than loss by striking a mine or any such untoward accident born of negligence or foeman's craft. Before passing to the details of the *Novik's* last fight, let us see what manner of a ship she was, and how poorly she was fitted to meet any but the very lightest warships in the Japanese Navy. The *Novik* was launched at

Elbing, Germany, in 1900, and may be described as a very fast protected cruiser of 3,300 tons, and with 18,000 horsepower engines. She had a nominal speed of 25 knots, and carried coal sufficient for a run of 900 miles at full speed. She had triple screws and was three funnelled, and her armament consisted of six 4'7 inch guns and six three-pounder and two one-pounder quick-firers. She had also five torpedo tubes. The weak spot in her design was that her engines were not entirely below the water-line; but she was a great favourite in the Russian Navy, and her brisk performances at Port Arthur were a constant source of pride and satisfaction throughout the Empire.

After parting company with the *Askold* on the night of August 10th, the *Novik* made for Kiao-chau harbour, which she entered on August 11th, and, after coaling, left the following morning. It was lucky that at this stage she escaped the attentions of Admiral Togo's watch-dogs, which shortly afterwards kept such close guard over the entrance to Kiao-chau Bay in order to intercept the *Tsarevitch* should the latter attempt to make an exit.

From Kiao-chau the *Novik* shaped her course round Japan for Vladivostok. It is believed that the intention of her commander was to make a dash through the Tsugaru Straits, in which the Vladivostok





ADMIRAL TOGO ON BOARD HIS FLAGSHIP, THE MIKASA.  
*A Sketch from Life.*



Squadron aforetime has disported itself, but the forts had extinguished their lights, making the passage impossible. Accordingly, the *Novik* proceeded north until on August 20th she reached the port of Korsakovsk in the Island of Sakhalin.

Here the *Novik* was among compatriots, for the Island of Sakhalin, which lies off the east coast of the Maritime Province of Siberia, is Russian territory, and is peopled largely by Russian convicts, some 5,000 of whom are employed to work the coal mines. The southern extremity of Sakhalin is separated from the Japanese island of Yezo by the Strait of La Pérouse, sometimes called the Soya Straits, from Soya Point on the Yezo coast. The southern part of Sakhalin used formerly to be claimed by Japan, but in the year 1875 she ceded it to Russia in exchange for certain of the Kurile Islands.

The captain of the *Novik* was evidently minded to make no long stay at a port which, although Russian, afforded no real shelter from the enemy's cruisers. He probably was well aware that his ship had been sighted at different points of her northward journey, and that the Japanese would make every effort to intercept her in the Soya Straits. His only hope seemed to be to coal as quickly as possible, and try to get through to Vladivostok before it was too late. By 4 p.m. on the afternoon of August 20th, he had coaled, and was preparing to come out of the harbour when a vessel was sighted, which proved to be a Japanese cruiser. True to the traditions which had already clustered round his gallant ship and crew, the captain of the *Novik* put to sea in order to give battle to the new-comer, hoping, perhaps, that in an interval his turn of speed would allow

him to slip away through the Soya Strait, and make direct for the Golden Horn.

We must now turn to the Japanese, and see what steps they have been taking to catch this swift-winged refugee from Port Arthur. As already hinted, the *Novik* has been reported once or twice during her journey up the east coast of Japan, and two fairly fast cruisers, the *Tsushima* and *Chitose*, have been detailed, if possible, to bring her to book.

The *Chitose* is a sister ship to the *Kasagi*, is of 4,784 tons displacement, and has a nominal speed of 22½ knots. The *Tsushima* is a sister ship to the *Niitaka*. She is of only 3,420 tons displacement, with a nominal speed of 20 knots. Both ships are, however, much more heavily armed than the *Novik*, the weight of the *Chitose's* broadside fire being 800 pounds, and that of the *Tsushima's* 920 pounds, while the *Novik's* broadside only aggregates 180 pounds.

It is early in the morning of August 19th that the *Tsushima* and *Chitose* learn that the *Novik* has been sighted from the Atoeya lighthouse on the Kurile Islands. The two vessels immediately head for the Soya Straits at full speed.

At dawn on Saturday, August 20th, the *Chitose* arrives at a point 20 miles north-east of Rebunshiri Island, and proceeds to search the Soya Straits, but is greatly handicapped by the heavy weather. At 8 o'clock the *Tsushima*, which has been searching to the westward, joins the *Chitose* close to Rebunshiri Island, and further measures are concerted. One can understand with what anxiety the chances are reckoned, and what close calculations are made of the possibility that the *Novik* has already made her escape. Of course, it is all a matter of coal and speed. It is clear that, even at the comparatively slow rate

at which she must have been steaming when she passed up the east coast of Japan, the *Novik's* coal must have been running rather short when she rounded the Kurile Islands. The problem seems to have been whether she had husbanded enough to enable her to get across to Vladivostok without touching at Sakhalin Island, and it is evident that the Japanese judged such a contingency to be possible, or they would not have commenced their search so far to the westward. The facts of the case as stated above show that the *Novik* must have been more or less compelled to coal at Korsakovsk before making finally for Vladivostok, and the rapidity with which she did this and put out again to sea shows that she, too, realised what a matter of minutes her chance of escape must have been.

The two Japanese cruisers, having compared notes upon the situation, set about the renewal of their search in a very methodical manner. Soya Straits at their narrowest are only forty miles wide, but the *Chitose* takes the line from Cape Soya to Isiretoko Point, some seventy miles to the north-east on the coast of Sakhalin Island, doubtless following what is called a "curve of search," such as is usually adopted by warships on the lookout for a moving enemy whose whereabouts are not accurately known. Meanwhile, the *Tsushima* is despatched towards Korsakovsk. It should be noted that both the Japanese cruisers, although comparatively small vessels, are duly equipped with the wireless telegraphy system which the Japanese have already shown their ability to use to the very fullest advantage. Doubtless, the *Chitose*, being the larger ship, would in ordinary circumstances have been selected to proceed to Korsakovsk,

but the *Chitose* had often been seen in action by the *Novik*, which, it was feared, might dart off at once on the approach of what she knew to be a hostile ship. The *Tsushima*, on the other hand, having two masts and three funnels, somewhat resembles the *Bogatyr*, and there was just a chance that the *Novik* might believe that that unfortunate vessel, which went on shore near Vladivostok in May, had been refloated, and was coming to her assistance. As a matter of fact, this expectation seems to have proved quite groundless, the *Tsushima* being promptly recognised by the *Novik* as a cruiser of the *Niitaka* type, but the suggestion shows how carefully every little movement of the Japanese warships is thought out, and how extremely anxious these two in particular were lest their quarry should escape them.

The *Tsushima* steers due north after parting from the *Chitose*, and in the afternoon comes sufficiently near to Korsakovsk to sight a three-funnelled ship lying inside the harbour. Approaching still closer, the Japanese discovered the *Novik* preparing to come out. She heads to the south, and has evidently planned to escape through the Soya Straits. The *Tsushima* places herself in a position to bar any sudden dash in that direction, and manœuvres so as to keep her port guns trained on the *Novik*. At the same time, a message by wireless telegraphy is despatched to the *Chitose*.

A duel at sea in any circumstances can hardly fail to be of great dramatic interest, but in this case there is much to accentuate the impressiveness of a scene which will live long in the annals of the two navies concerned. It is not so much the actual surroundings, as the moral conditions in which the fight to a finish is about to take place that lend special

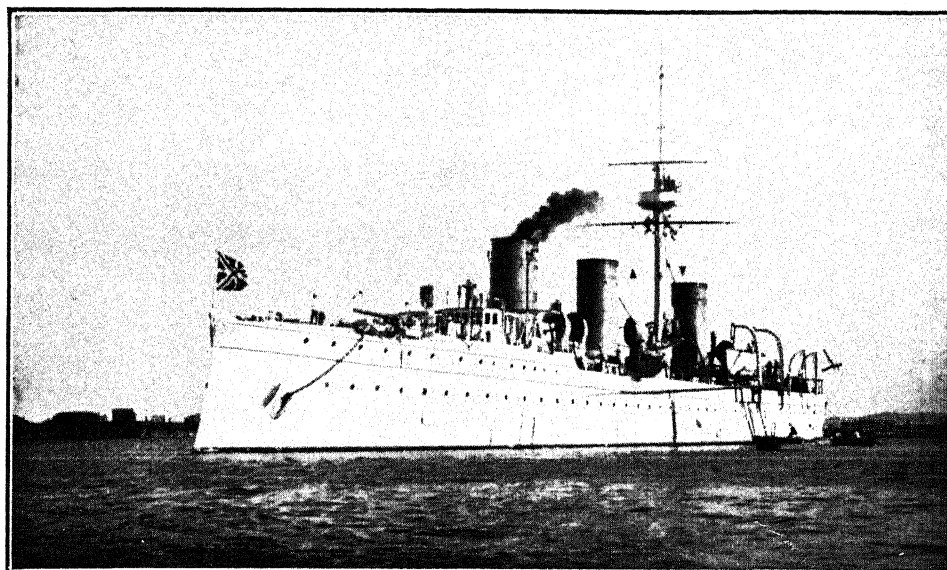


Photo: Topical Press Photo Agency.

THE RUSSIAN CRUISER *NOVIK*.

fascination to the grim encounter. Yet there is something weird about the very remoteness of the spot, far removed as it is from any trace of civilisation other than that which but lightly tinges a convict settlement, more especially, perhaps, one like that on Sakhalin Island. At Korsakovsk there may be some few spectators of the combat, for there is a detachment of Russian troops in the place, and the officers will be anxiously following the movements of the two vessels with their glasses. For the rest, there are probably only a handful of wretched Mongols and Ainus who could possibly be witnesses of this sharp, short struggle between two modern warships, one hoping still to find a shelter after her long flight from Port Arthur, the other nervously resolute to spare no effort to disable a renowned and highly respected adversary.

As will have been gathered from the details given, the two combatants are

not unequally matched. The *Tsushima* has the weight of metal, and the *Novik* has the turn of speed. Nor, in all probability, has the former any such advantage in the matter of gunnery as the Japanese have hitherto enjoyed in their naval encounters with the enemy. This is the *Tsushima*'s maiden fight, for hitherto she has been engaged exclusively in patrol duties. On the other hand, the *Novik* has been so constantly in action that her gunners have had perhaps more practice than those on board any other Russian vessel; while it is certain that she will be well handled from the start by her gallant captain, whose splendid seamanship has already won him many a frank encomium from Admiral Togo's officers and men.

It is half-past four, and the vessels have drawn within fairly close range of one another. The captain of the *Tsushima* presses a button, and the whole of the ship's port broadside, nearly half

a ton of steel, is poured against the enemy. The *Novik* responds immediately, and the shells from her 4'7 inch guns come screeching round the *Tsushima* in such a businesslike fashion as to make it evident that the victory is no foregone conclusion for the more heavily-armed ship. Hot and furious becomes the interchange of fire. The Japanese gunners are desperately eager in their efforts to hit the *Novik*, and some of the officers become so hoarse trying to make themselves heard above the din of battle that they completely lose their voices, and are reduced—so says the *Standard's* Tokio correspondent—to writing their words of command with chalk!

After three-quarters of an hour's hard fighting, the *Novik* puts about and heads again for Korsakovsk harbour. She

has three holes below the water-line and two above, while part of her steering gear is damaged, and only six of her boilers are in good order. As she steers northwards, still fighting, the *Tsushima* follows. Suddenly one of the *Novik's* shells comes ricochetting from the water and strikes the *Tsushima* on the star-board side near the coal bunkers. The ship begins to leak, but the handy Japanese soon effect temporary repairs. Further pursuit is, however, out of the question, and the engagement accordingly ends at 5 o'clock.

The *Tsushima* now makes further signals by wireless telegraphy to the *Chitose*, and it is indicative of the smartness of the Russians that, notwithstanding their rather sorry plight, they should try hard, and for a time successfully, to intercept

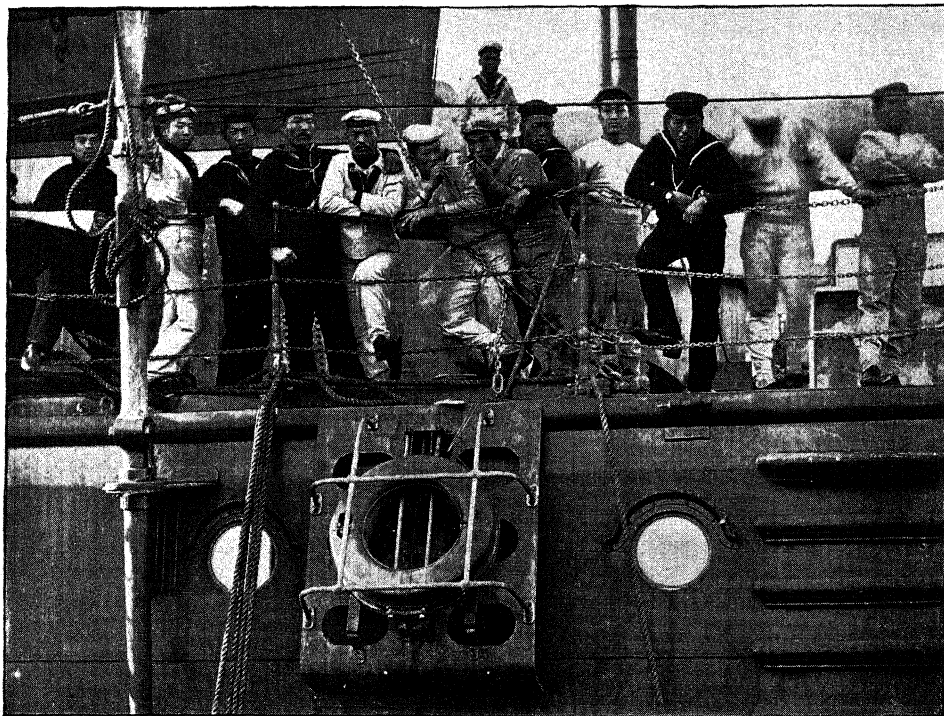


Photo : S. Cribb, Southsea.

JAPANESE BLUEJACKETS ON THE MIKASA.

these messages by their own wireless installation. At last, however, the *Tsushima* manages to inform the *Chitose* that the *Novik* is in Korsakovsk harbour, which she herself proceeds to keep under observation during the ensuing hours of darkness.

And what of the *Novik*? Alas, the good little ship has fought her last fight, and her end is very near. Her captain had hoped to effect repairs in Korsakovsk harbour, which would enable him to put to sea again at night. But the rudder is found to be past all hope. Moreover, fresh lights show that the *Tsushima* is being reinforced—for the *Chitose* is now coming up—and with sad reluctance, we may be sure, the captain of the *Novik* decides to abandon his beloved ship, and to sink her in shallow water, in the vague hope that some day it may be possible to refloat her and restore her to the list of Russia's fighting ships. During the night of August 20th, accordingly, the officers and crew and stores of the *Novik* were conveyed ashore. The crew are still engaged in landing at dawn when they are disturbed by the sudden appearance of the *Chitose*, and have to take rather hurriedly to their boats and launches.

The *Chitose*, the officers and crew of which are doubtless a good deal disheartened at their bad luck in missing the duel, enters the Korsakovsk harbour at daybreak, and finds the place seemingly deserted. With the exception of the sailors, who are landing from the *Novik*, there is no one about, and the houses are closed. It seems likely that the town, such as it is, has been temporarily abandoned, the residents withdrawing to a safe distance beyond the reach of a warship's guns.

The *Novik* herself lies beached close to

the town. She has listed ten degrees to port, and her upper works aft are awash.

From about half-past six to quarter past seven the *Chitose* shells the *Novik's* hull, with a view to completely disabling her. An inglorious process, truly, but a wise precaution to take with a modern warship which has as many lives as a cat, and can be made "as good as new" after having been to all appearances riddled like a sieve.

After coming to within 2,500 yards of the partly submerged vessel the *Chitose* steams away, her officers satisfied that the *Novik's* injuries are such that no amount of repairs will ever restore the vessel's fighting efficiency.

Thus ends the brief and brilliant career of the "pet toy of the Russian Navy," a ship whose exploits are of just that class that go far to keep naval opinion in a healthy state of flux. No one, of course, who is moderately sane contends that a plethora of *Noviks* can make up for a deficiency in battleships, and we have already seen the *Novik* herself, on the morning of February 9th, compelled to withdraw very hastily out of range of the great *Mikasa's* guns. Half a dozen *Noviks* might well hesitate to attack a single battleship, except on the desperate chance of getting some of their torpedoes home while two or three of themselves were being sent to the bottom. But there is much virtue in a fine record of success in actual fighting, and the services which the *Novik* has been able to render Russia in the first six months of war are such that she will long serve to support the arguments of those who believe the future to have great things in store for very fast light cruisers a quarter of the size of our monsters *Terrible* and *Powerful*, and with some of the *Novik's* more serious

limitations removed. For the *Novik* might be fighting Russia's battles still, if any one of her three chief defects had been remedied. If her coal capacity had been but a little greater she would undoubtedly have reached Vladivostok before she could have been overtaken; if she had been less vulnerable, her boilers would not have suffered as they did, and she might have escaped during the action itself; and, finally, if she had had heavier guns, she might have succeeded in sinking the *Tsushima* instead of merely crippling her for the time being.

Be all this as it may, the *Novik's* course is run, and she will live in history as one of several little ships which have gained immortality by the exhibition of sheer audacity and entire indifference to overwhelming odds. In our naval history there are some notable examples. Take, for instance, the case of Lord Charles Beresford's gunboat, which earned the famous signal, "Well done, *Condor!*" at the bombardment of Alexandria. A finer record still is that of the "mad little craft" which forced the fifty-three great ships of Spain, and of which our Tennyson sings so gloriously:

"And so  
The little *Revenge* ran on sheer into the heart  
of the foe,  
With her hundred fighters on deck and her ninety  
sick below;  
For half of their fleet to the right and half to  
the left were seen,  
And the little *Revenge* ran on thro' the long sea-  
lane between."

No single vessel of small size could hope nowadays to emulate the glorious last fight of Sir Richard Grenville's ship, for naval science has sadly diminished the value of the points which once belonged to seamanship alone. But the

*Novik* has won the right to be classed in the noble company of such great little men-of-war, and her flag should fly all the more proudly in the atmosphere of naval history by reason of the poor show made by so many of the bigger and stronger ships in the Navy of which she has been a sparkling ornament.

The casualties in the duel between the *Novik* and the *Tsushima* were quite surprisingly small. The latter, indeed, according to the official report, had not a single man killed or wounded. On the *Novik* there were two sailors killed, and two seriously wounded, while a lieutenant and fourteen sailors were slightly wounded.

In Japan the news of the fate of the *Novik* creates great satisfaction, tempered by sincere sentimental regret for the loss of a gallant adversary. The escape of such a fast vessel to Vladivostok might have caused Japan serious inconvenience, and have greatly discounted the advantages secured by the sinking of the *Rurik*, and the damages inflicted on the *Rossia* and *Gromoboi*. In St. Petersburg, the destruction of the *Novik* frees a flood of deplorable recriminations at the Admiralty, much of it apparently quite disconnected with the mishap itself. This is no uncommon phenomenon, but it is one of rather more than ordinary significance in such a hot-bed of officialdom in Russia. At present the favourite scapegoat seems to be Admiral Skrydloff, who is greatly blamed for having allowed the Vladivostok squadron to go so far south in the hope of joining the Port Arthur Fleet. Certainly, if he had sent them instead to the Soya Straits to meet and assist the *Novik*, he might have saved the latter, and sunk either the *Chitose* or *Tsushima*, or both. But it is easy to be wise after

the event; and doubtless it was expected at Vladivostok that the *Novik* would slip through the Tsugaru Strait, as she is said to have attempted to do.

Some little doubt appears to be felt

tion. Early in the morning of September 6th the Russian look-out stations at Korsakovsk report that two Japanese ships are approaching, and the Russian detachment of troops stands to its arms.

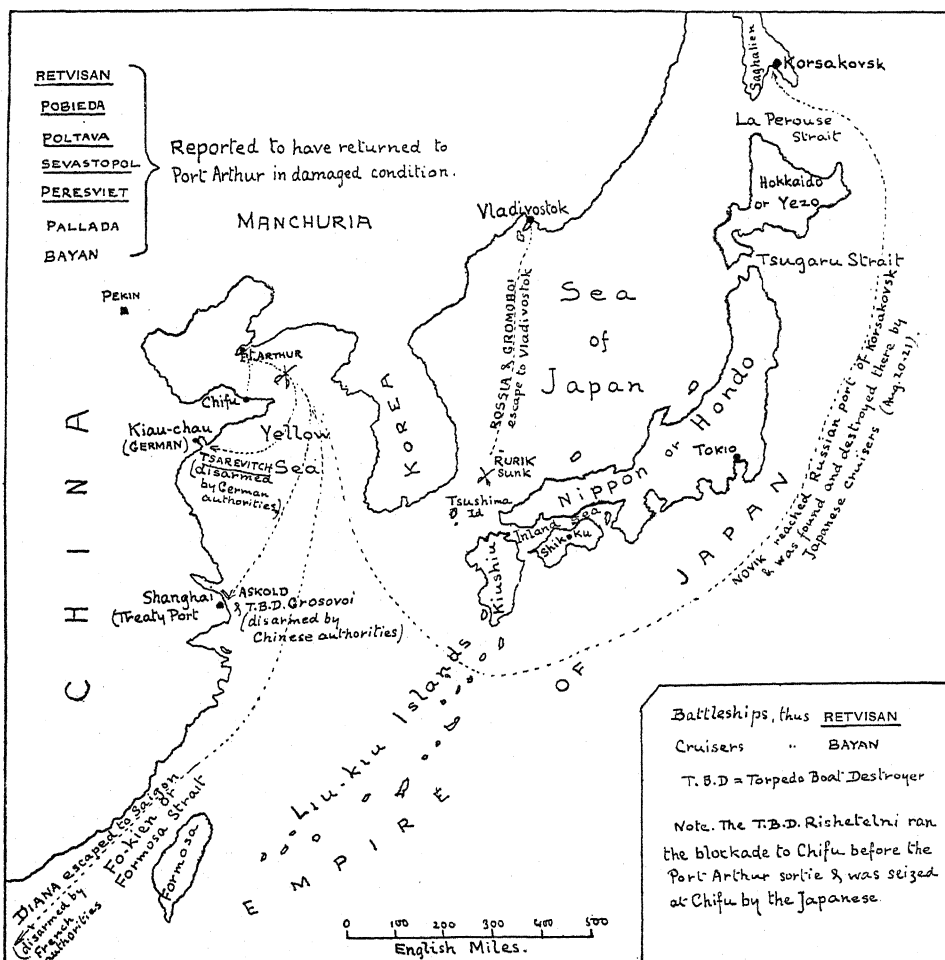


CHART SHOWING THE DISPERSAL OF THE RUSSIAN SHIPS AFTER TOGO'S AND KAMIMURA'S NAVAL VICTORIES.

at Tokio as to the completeness with which the destruction of the *Novik* has been carried out, and about a fortnight after the duel an expedition is sent to ascertain definitely the cruiser's condi-

tion. When the ships—according to one account they are cruisers; according to another, transports—have arrived within 8,000 yards of the Korsakovsk station, two steam pinnaces are seen to put from



the vessels, and head towards the cruiser *Novik*, which they reach about 10 o'clock. Japanese sailors are seen moving on the bridge of the *Novik*.

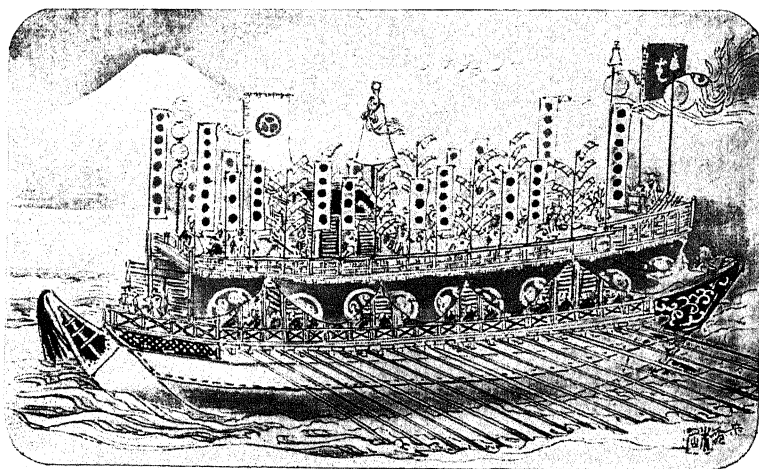
The commander of the Russian detachment now orders his men to fire on the boats, and on the deck of the *Novik*. The fire is sufficiently accurate to disturb the Japanese at their work, and to cause them to return to their ships. The Russians continue firing, and the Japanese reply from their boats, but no damage is done on either side.

The ships—the unlikelihood of their being cruisers is supported by the fact that they have not attempted to shell the Russian detachment—having taken the boats on board, weigh anchor about noon, and stand away to sea. The Russians now proceed to examine the *Novik*, in which they find some mines

and electrical conductors, evidently laid with the intention to blow up what remained of the cruiser.

The Japanese officers of this expedition on returning to Tokio report that the *Novik* has now a list of 30 degrees, and, with the exception of a small portion of the bows, is entirely submerged, the water being knee-deep even at the shallowest parts on the upper deck. The conning-tower and upper works are badly knocked about, and the destruction under water is evidently considerable.

There is a later telegram to the effect that two Japanese warships bombarded Korsakovsk on September 7th, and fired torpedoes at the sunken cruiser. Evidently the Japanese want to make sure that the "plucky little *Novik*" will not once more walk the waters, and have to be destroyed all over again.



From a Native Drawing.

JAPANESE WARSHIP OF THE SHŌGUN, OF THE PERIOD KAYEI (A.D. 1848-1854).

(From Arthur Diósy's "The New Far East.")

## CHAPTER LIII.

RUSSIA AND NEUTRAL SHIPPING—DANGEROUS STATE OF TENSION—LORD LANSDOWNE'S STATEMENT OF BRITISH POLICY—THE VOLUNTEER "CRUISERS" RE-APPEAR—PROTEST OF THE LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE—THE FORTE FINDS THE PETERBURG AND SMOLENSK—IMPROVED PROSPECTS.

IT is annoying to be compelled to recur at this juncture to the subject of Russia's interference with neutral shipping, a subject which it is not easy to invest with anything like picturesque attractiveness. But even a war history cannot be all "purple patches," and in this case an otherwise rather dull series of episodes has some bright redeeming features. Above all, we must remember that, quite apart from the big commercial interests involved, this particular chapter of events had at one time a very lurid interest for Great Britain. It is easy, now that the danger seems to be over, to say that there never was much danger, and that, even if things had gone further than they did, the "common-sense of most" would have asserted itself, and a peaceful issue would have been found. But the facts point all the other way, and it is not too much to believe that, during this period some very anxious moments were passed by our responsible statesmen, in the fear lest diplomacy might not be able to prevent a complication from which any sort of pacific withdrawal would be hopeless.

In Chapter XLIII. the question of Russia's interference with neutral shipping was discussed up to a point at which it seemed that a settlement would almost immediately follow. An understanding had been arrived at with regard, at any

rate, to the Volunteer Fleet steamers, the *Peterburg* and *Smolensk*, and it was clear that the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs was in earnest in his endeavours to bring about a more satisfactory situation. But the Russian Admiralty had issued a memorandum with reference to the *Malacca* incident, which was open to some objection, and the performances of the Vladivostok Squadron had given rise to such anxiety among shipowners in this country, that the P. and O.—followed later by other lines—had announced its determination to suspend temporarily its service to Japan.

In other words, notwithstanding official assurances, there was an uneasy feeling abroad that further trouble might be brewing even in regard to the Volunteer Fleet. It was also abundantly clear that the actual situation was an exasperating one to the greatest maritime nation in the world. The withdrawal from the Japan service of the P. and O., Holt, Thompson, and other leading English lines gave a prompt and decided stimulus to the carrying trade of Germany, and British shipowners naturally viewed with growing bitterness this serious transfer of profits to rivals whose risks ought to have been the same as theirs, but who nevertheless continued to accept as freight merchandise undoubtedly contraband according to the Russian

view. Rightly or wrongly, the idea was strengthened that German ship-owners expected to secure from Russia more favourable treatment than that which would be accorded to British vessels. It goes without saying, that a suspicion of this sort, coupled with a most serious pecuniary loss in the present, and the knowledge that the British carrying trade to Japan would probably suffer future lasting injury by reason of this suspension, was hardly calculated to promote friendly feeling. Indeed, it is difficult to exaggerate the intense irritation which existed during July and August, and more especially, perhaps, during the first three weeks of the latter month, with reference to the extraordinary position in which British shipping interests had been placed by Russian pretensions as to the right of search. In not a few quarters was to be heard the bitter lament that Palmerston could not rise from his grave and take in hand a situation which doubtless he would have dealt with summarily, though possibly with hardly satisfactory results.

For there is not much doubt that a good deal of the trouble which arose from Russia's treatment of neutrals was deliberately anticipated by a certain section in Russia which would have been only too pleased if the British Government had acted according to the Palmerstonian tradition. As has already been indicated in this narrative (see page 530), the Russian Admiralty is swayed by the anti-British influence of the Grand Duke Alexander Michailovitch to such an extent that the Russian Foreign Office has the greatest difficulty in carrying on its negotiations with Great Britain. Had the Marquis of Lansdowne acted at any stage of the *Malacca* affair as the great high-handed Pam would have done, war

would probably have been inevitable, since the anti-English party at St. Petersburg would have found it easy to persuade the Tsar that the honour of Russia had been grossly insulted. Even as things were, there must have been a time when only by a supreme effort could Count Lamsdorff get the mastery of the forces working against him.

To some who love history for history's sake, it may seem that, in the whole record of the first six months of the war between Russia and Japan, there is no more striking situation than this, which has been organised by a small but immensely powerful clique of high personages seeking to cover their country's humiliation by a display of arrogance certain, if carried to much greater lengths, to create a fresh and much more powerful adversary. One may go further and doubt whether in the recorded annals of the world there is anything that quite tallies with this remarkable development of an already great and epoch-making war. For half a year it has been clearly apparent to the civilised nations of the earth that Russia will have as much as she can do to prevent the utter annihilation of her Far Eastern interests by the Army and Navy of Japan. Her finances are in no flourishing condition, her internal state is full of dangerous possibilities; yet, deliberately, those highest in the councils of the Tsar are seeking to provoke the resentment of a Power which, whatever may be its limitations, has certain warlike attributes calculated to inspire respect.

The exact cause of this phenomenon will probably never be known. It has been suggested that, while the idea of making terms with Japan was utterly repugnant to the proud *entourage* of the Tsar, it was thought some less humiliating

compromise could be effected if Great Britain could be goaded into a declaration of war which would link her with Japan in a fighting alliance. Other theories point to a wish to entangle Great Britain at any cost, in the hope of securing the intervention of France or Germany, or both. A third supposition is that, in some Russian circles it was still believed that a Russian descent upon India could be made which would soon wipe out the memories of reverses in the Far East, and would even compensate the destruction of what is left of the Russian Navy. Whether any or none of these hypotheses be sound, the fact remains that the Russian Admiralty strained the patience of the British nation in August, 1904, well-nigh to the breaking-point, and that the tension was fully as great as it was after the Panj-deh incident of 1886 or *l'affaire Fashoda* of 1898.

What added enormously to the indignation felt in this country was the studiously aggravating fashion in which Russia set to work, after the apparent settlement of the *Peterburg* and *Smolensk* dispute, to devise fresh means of subjecting British commerce to scrutiny and delay. Putting aside for the moment the question as to the right of Volunteer steamers, which had passed the Dardanelles as merchantmen, to transform themselves suddenly into men-of-war, the Russian Government proceeded to convert other merchant vessels into "cruisers" merely for the purpose of searching for contraband; and one or two liners purchased from Germany were reported to have undergone this strange transformation. At first, it was believed in this country that such a proceeding was in sheer defiance of the international laws of war, and that, in fact, the example of the *Alabama* was here being

closely imitated. But it subsequently transpired—and the point is of the greatest interest—that, according to the Law Officers of the Crown, "there can be no doubt that merchant ships may be sold by neutrals to any government, and that government may turn these ships into cruisers if they please."

On the other hand, there is something questionable in the action of a government which seems to strain its legal powers more for the purpose of giving annoyance to neutrals, or, as is suggested in this case, one particular neutral, than with any definite hope of achieving practical results. Contraband is, of course, being carried to Japan in British and other ships, and contraband will continue to be carried, in every war in which there is a chance of making a profit sufficient to compensate the risk. But the amount of genuine contraband of war which is being taken to Japan is certainly relatively small, for the simple reason that Japan does not want it. As regards war material she is amply supplied, and now, to a great extent, self-supporting. But it is easy for Russia to pretend the contrary, in order to give her an opportunity of interfering with the world's commerce. Accordingly, her "quick-change cruisers"—merchantmen one day and warships the next—are sent to various points of the compass to intercept British ships, board them, worry the captains with questions, talk bigly about their belligerent rights, and, in short, make themselves seriously objectionable. Well may the British master mariner—sometimes a choleric individual—chafe at being stopped by vessels whose sole claim to be considered men-of-war lies in a flag and a few hastily imported guns. Well may British shipowners ask how it is that a strong Government, with

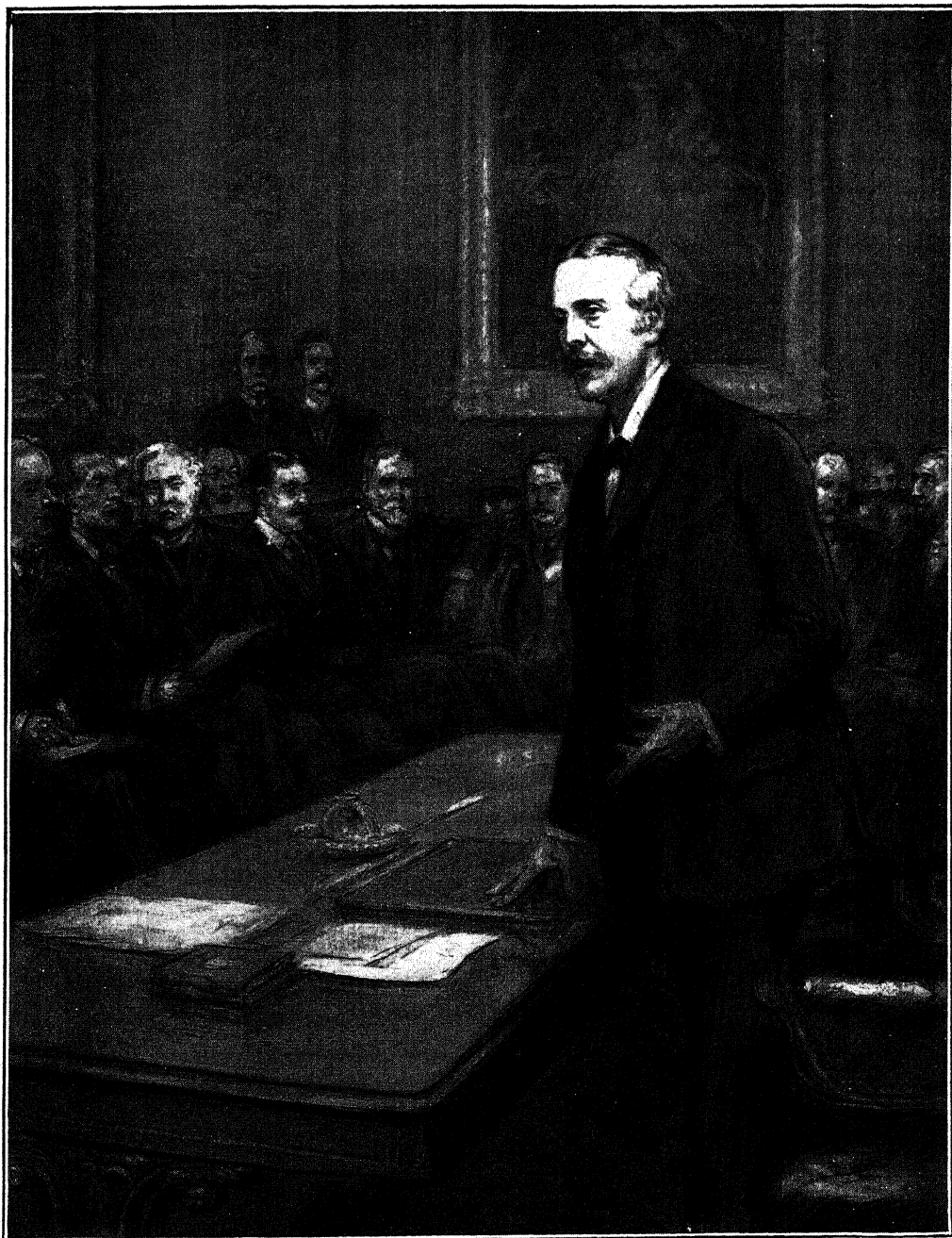
the greatest navy in the world at its beck and call, cannot secure its mercantile marine from such constant and often causeless interruption.

The British Government is not slow to perceive that the temper of the nation is rising, and that more particularly the case of the *Knight Commander*, the vessel actually sunk by the Vladivostok Squadron, has aroused the sort of feeling which no Government can afford to disregard. On August 11th, then, in reply to a carefully pointed question from the Marquis of Ripon, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, makes a singularly important statement as to the policy of the Government in regard, first, to the sinking of the *Knight Commander*; secondly, to the general question of contraband of war; and thirdly, to the passage of the Dardanelles by steamers of the Russian Volunteer Fleet.

A statement of policy like this is, of course, a very serious, indeed a most solemn matter, quite apart from the personality of those concerned in it. Yet, to some present on this occasion, it must have seemed that only with difficulty could two statesmen representing opposite parties in the House of Lords have been selected to replace the Marquises of Lansdowne and Ripon as the appropriate chief actors in such a scene. Both have been Viceroy of India, both have been Secretaries of State for War, and each has many separate claims to distinction on the score of brilliant public service wholly dissociated—for both are noblemen of immense wealth and influence—from any idea of personal aggrandisement. Lord Lansdowne speaks with all the added dignity conferred by his actual position, as well as by the historic prestige of the "F. O."; yet a peculiar

interest is attached to the question put by Lord Ripon, in that the latter won his marquise by services as chairman of the *Alabama* Commission. The exploits of that famous privateer, which, under the Confederate colours, captured nearly seventy Northern vessels in her career of nearly two years, and eventually cost this country three and a quarter millions, are fading from men's minds. But it may be recalled of her that, like the Vladivostok Squadron, she did not do much fighting, but preyed on merchant vessels that could not fight. It is one of the minor curiosities of history that such a memory should have been revived—although the fact does not appear to have been noted at the time—in connection with episodes like the sinking of the *Knight Commander* and performances like those of the unlicensed rovers of the Russian Volunteer Fleet.

From which digression let us revert to Lord Lansdowne's weighty statement. The Foreign Secretary deals first with the question of the passage of the Dardanelles by the Volunteer Fleet steamers. With reference to the *Peterburg* and *Smolensk*, he observes that the question has now passed out of the acute stage, and he adds, "As we now know that the instructions which have been sent to these ships to desist from similar seizures *have reached their destination*, we may therefore assume that no further seizures will take place." In view of what follows, the words italicised should be remembered. As to the reports current respecting further movements of Volunteer steamers through the Dardanelles, Lord Lansdowne confirms the statement that the Turkish Government has insisted that in future such vessels should contain no munitions of war nor armament, that they should fly the commercial flag during



MR. BALFOUR ADDRESSING THE DEPUTATION FROM THE LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

their whole voyage, and should not be turned into cruisers.

Lord Lansdowne next proceeds to discuss the question of contraband of war, the definition of which by Russia has not, he states clearly, been acquiesced in by the British Government. This is not the place to go clearly into the question of absolute and conditional contraband, some expert remarks upon which were given at the close of the first volume of this history. But it may be said briefly that Lord Lansdowne emphatically denies that this country had recognised Russia's right "to decide that certain articles or classes of articles are, as a matter of course, and without reference to other considerations, to be dealt with as contraband of war, regardless of the well-established rights of neutrals." On the contrary, the British Government has entered a firm protest on the subject, and has refused to be bound by or to recognise as valid the decision of any Prize Court which violates neutrals' rights or is otherwise not in conformity with the recognised principles of International Law.

Thirdly, the Foreign Secretary uses particularly plain language on the subject of the sinking of the *Knight Commander*. "We are altogether unable, my lords," says the noble marquis, speaking for his Majesty's Government in the full consciousness of what that spokesmanship implies, "to admit that the sinking of the *Knight Commander* was justifiable according to any principles of international law by which this country has ever regarded itself as bound." He goes on to observe that the case of the *Knight Commander* awaits trial by the appellate Prize Court at St. Petersburg. If the St. Petersburg Court should reverse the decision of the Vladivostok

Court, that will be a matter for congratulation. "But, whether that be the case or not, we are in any case unable to admit that the destruction of the vessel was justifiable, or that the proceedings of these vessels have any validity so far as this particular case is concerned." There is nothing more uncompromisingly lucid than the language of British diplomacy when at last the moment for "straight talk" has arrived, and Palmerston himself could not, with all his bluff homeliness, have stated the Government policy with regard to the sinking of the *Knight Commander* more directly and emphatically than did the courtly and polished statesman who followed the great Lord Salisbury as our Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In concluding this memorable utterance, Lord Lansdowne dwells on the cumulative effect upon British commerce which such measures as those adopted by Russia could not fail to exercise. He gives examples, too, of the cruel injustice which might be perpetrated if the doctrines advocated by Russia were pushed to very ordinary lengths. Strong representations have been made to Russia to the effect that its conduct in this matter has gone far beyond what the British Government considers justifiable. The language of the Russian Government favours the belief that acts of destruction of neutral prizes will not be repeated, and there is room for hope that a reasonable and amicable understanding will be arrived at upon the question of contraband. "I can assure your lordships," says the Foreign Secretary, in a peroration which draws cheers from an audience not usually emotional, "that we deeply realise the gravity of the question to which the noble marquis has called attention, and we shall deem it



our duty to insist strongly upon the rights which this country possesses as a neutral Power, rights which, owing to her predominant interest in the commerce of the Far East, she is, more than any other Power, called upon to vindicate."

A few days after the making of this statement in the House of Lords a note was presented to the Russian Government through Sir Charles Hardinge, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, in which the questions raised by Lord Ripon were specifically dealt with. Exception was taken to the Russian doctrine concerning the contraband nature of food-stuffs, the right of Russia to sink neutral merchantmen was contested, and compensation was demanded in the case of the *Knight Commander*. Simultaneously the Government of the United States made a protest against the confiscation of flour found on board the *Arabia*, and also contended that, in the case of a variety of articles mentioned in the Russian list of contraband of war, a distinction should be drawn between absolute and conditional contraband; that coal, for instance, should not be regarded as contraband unless it is obviously intended for use by the enemy's warships.

A conciliatory spirit was beginning to be manifested by the Russian Government with regard to these protests when, on the top of various despatches announcing detentions and searches by Russian "warships," came a telegram from Durban stating that on the previous day the steamer *Comedian* had been stopped by our old friend the *Smolensk*, still posing as a Russian man-of-war!

The impression created by this announcement was a painful one. It had been confidently believed that, as Lord Lansdowne stated in the House of Lords, the instructions to the *Peterburg* and

*Smolensk* to cease masquerading as warships had been duly delivered, and that no further trouble would arise in respect to these two vessels. Even when it transpired that the instructions had not reached their destination, having arrived at Suez after the *Smolensk* had left, it was recalled that in the terms of the Russian Admiralty Memorandum quoted on page 526, the two vessels had received a "special commission," the term of which had long ago expired. It was impossible to recognise the reappearance of the *Smolensk* in her old rôle as compatible with that declaration, which now, more than ever, seemed to partake of the character of a diplomatic fiction. The British Press commented with significant vigour upon an incident which savoured so strongly of bad faith. It is pleasant to be able to add that even in Russia the news was very unfavourably received in official circles, in which some regard was still felt for the traditions of honourable diplomacy. It was felt that once again Count Lamsdorff had been placed in a difficult position "by the same great personages who had thwarted all his efforts, and overruled all his advice in the early stages of the disastrous Far Eastern imbroglio." The fact that the *Smolensk* and her consort had not yet been put in possession of the orders terminating their "commission" was evidently regarded as an indication that forces were still at work in Russia itself which might seriously counteract the best efforts of her diplomatists.

Although not directly arising out of the *Smolensk's* stoppage of the *Comedian*, there is little doubt that a marked agitation among British shipping circles was brought to a head by this incident. At any rate, on August 25th a large and representative meeting of the East India

and China Trade Section of the London Chamber of Commerce, and others interested in the shipping industry, was held in Cannon Street, with a view to making representations to his Majesty's Government on the unsatisfactory condition of affairs as regards contraband of war and trade with the Far East generally. The Prime Minister had consented to receive subsequently a deputation from this meeting, whose deliberations were, therefore, of even more than usual gravity and interest.

A great deal of quiet impressiveness surrounds a meeting of any of the larger Chambers of Commerce in this country, more especially, perhaps, where huge shipping interests are concerned. The Merchant Princes of England are men who as individuals almost invariably command respect. For the mere existence of a successful business enterprise in these days of progress and competition generally depends upon the possession by the head of the firm of altogether exceptional qualities of administration, not to speak of singular gifts of resolution, alertness, and sagacity. Many of the strong, calm faces to be seen at such meetings as that under allusion belong to men who are called upon a dozen times in the day to decide at short notice issues involving the movements of scores, perhaps hundreds, of *employés*, and the disbursement of thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, of pounds. A special influence, of course, is wielded by those who place huge steamships on the sea, and direct their movements from port to distant port as easily and confidently as a child shifts his fleet of paper boats. These, perhaps more than all the rest, are, if not the kings, at least the true "Ablemen," as Carlyle would say, of commerce, for they rule both by land and

sea, crowding the ocean highways with craft which in size and swiftness rival the finest warships afloat, and in ports and cities swaying great staffs of workers, and dealing daily with massive problems of freight, insurance, passenger traffic, and what not else of maritime significance.

The collective influence of a body of men like this can never be accurately gauged. It is a thing so many-sided, so indefinite, that those whom it most affects cannot always be sure from what quarter the pressure comes, or the extent to which it is being exercised. But it is safe to say that the London Chamber of Commerce can, if it wishes, wield a power in some respects not very far short of that possessed by the House of Commons itself. It generally surpasses that Assembly, too, in knowing what it wants, and in the force and brevity with which it does its business.

At this historic meeting these last-named attributes are sharply in evidence. The chairman, himself a member of Parliament, Mr. William Keswick, of the great China firm of Jardine and Co., after briefly stating the reasons why the meeting had been called, pointed out how important it was that what they had to represent should be discussed "quietly, reasonably, and with proper appreciation of the difficulties." This was the note to which this remarkable meeting was attuned; and very quietly, very reasonably, and with every consideration for the position of the Government, resolutions were passed voicing the apprehensions felt in the City as to the effect upon British trade of Russia's interpretation of contraband, and calling upon the Government to take immediate and effective steps for the protection of British shipping. In one respect the

resolution appealing to Government was remarkable. It was asked that an effort should be made to "ensure the same degree of immunity from vexatious stoppages and examinations as was apparently enjoyed by the shipping of other nationalities."

When, later in the day, a deputation from this meeting was received by Mr.

underwriters who were prepared to insure foreign ships proceeding to the Far East at far lower rates than those at which they would insure British ships. With regard to contraband of war, Mr. Balfour repeated the assurance given by the Marquis of Lansdowne, and alluded to the presentation of a note to Russia defining a position from which it was im-

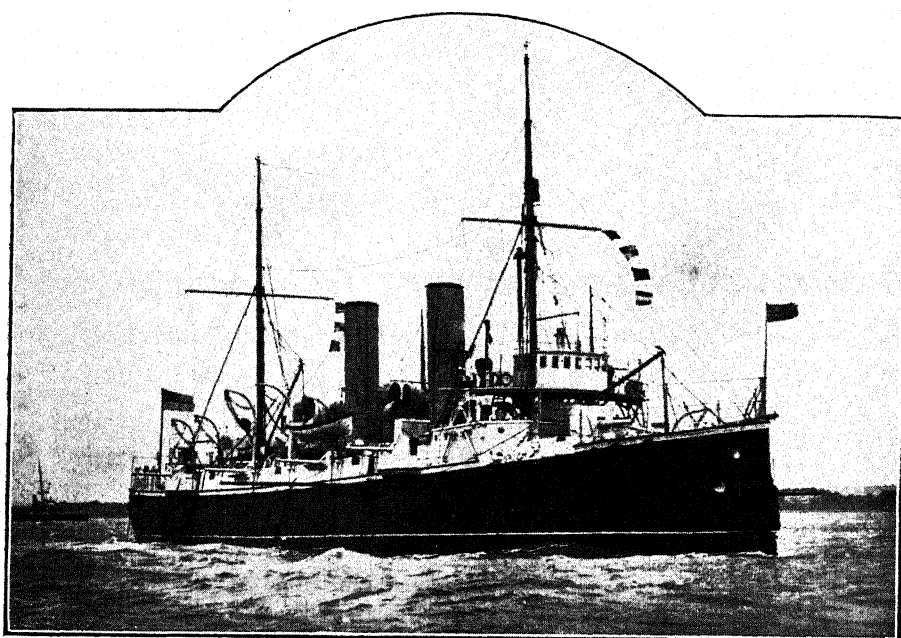


Photo: S. Cribb, Southsea.

H.M.S. FORTE.

Balfour at the Foreign Office, the Prime Minister went very carefully into the question of the alleged preference shown to shipping of other nationalities, and he did his best to show that no differential treatment had in fact occurred. He even entered into a little rule of three calculation of the ratio of captures to the value of shipping in the case of Germany and ourselves. But the deputation were not profoundly impressed. They pointed out that they had to deal with

possible for the British Government to recede.

One piece of special information the Prime Minister had for the deputation. This related to the appearance of the *Peterburg* and *Smolensk* in South African waters, an "unfortunate occurrence," as Mr. Balfour moderately observed. The Russian Government had now asked the British Government to search for the two ships, and convey a message carrying out the pledges already given. Accordingly,

two British cruisers from the Cape of Good Hope Squadron had been ordered to make the search, thereby, it was to be hoped, bringing the Volunteer Fleet episode finally to an end.

The sequel to this arrangement is of some interest. Unfortunately, at the moment the Cape of Good Hope Squadron, which is under the command of Rear-Admiral John Durnford, C.B., D.S.O., is not very well placed for carrying out such a search as the one indicated, being a good deal scattered; while the only ships at the headquarters of the Squadron, St. Simon's Bay, are the cruiser *Terpsichore* and the depot-ship *Simoom*, both of which are undergoing repairs, and the cruiser *Barrosa*, which is under orders for Walfisch Bay to relieve the gunboat *Partridge*. Admiral Durnford with his flagship, the cruiser *Crescent*; the cruisers *Pearl* and *Forte* and the sloop *Odin* are near Zanzibar, and it is clear that some time will probably elapse before the two rovers are found in the extensive hunting grounds in which they are now moving.

As a matter of fact, it is not until 3 o'clock in the morning of September 6th that H.M.S. *Forte*, having weighed anchor and steamed south from Zanzibar, observes the masts of two suspicious steamers in Menai Bay, South Island. A German steamer had, on the previous day at Zanzibar, reported sighting two Russian "warships" in territorial waters, and there can now be no doubt that these are the identical pair. In the dim morning light the two vessels do not notice the *Forte* until she is fairly close to them, but when they do catch sight of the British cruiser they hurriedly interchange signals and weigh anchor.

The *Forte*—which is a second-class cruiser of 4,360 tons commanded by

Captain Charles Dundas—runs up the signal "Have important despatches," and the Russian vessels drop anchor again. Captain Dundas now sends a boat conveying a Russian telegram in cipher and the British Government's formal demand that the two "cruisers" are to desist forthwith from interfering with British shipping. It is a somewhat exciting moment, for it is clearly understood that instructions have been given to the captain of the *Forte* to "stand no nonsense." Presently the boat returns with the message that a reply will be sent shortly from the *Peterburg*.

In due course Captain Skalsky, of the *Peterburg*, comes on board the *Forte*, and, as he is unquestionably a captain in the Imperial Russian Navy, whatever may be the status of his vessel, he is received with the usual compliments. He proves to be a very courteous and polished gentleman, speaking English fluently. He states that he only arrived yesterday, and that stress of weather accounts for the presence of the two "cruisers" off Zanzibar, and for the fact that they have only searched one steamer.

It is impressed upon Captain Skalsky that he must not linger in these parts, and the Russian captain declares that the two ships shall leave at once. With admirable presence of mind he asks to be permitted to coal at Zanzibar now that he is under orders for Russia, but Captain Dundas says that it will be necessary to refer home before this request can be granted. In view of what follows, the request made by the Russian captain is rather entertaining.

Captain Dundas duly returns Captain Skalsky's visit, and it is ascertained that, notwithstanding the latter's assurance, the *Peterburg* is full of coal. She carries seven 5-in. and a few smaller guns; the

*Smolensk's* armament being apparently eleven guns of different calibres, the one large gun being of not much use, while all are more or less obsolete. Such is the warlike "make-up" of these bogeys of the British shipping trade.

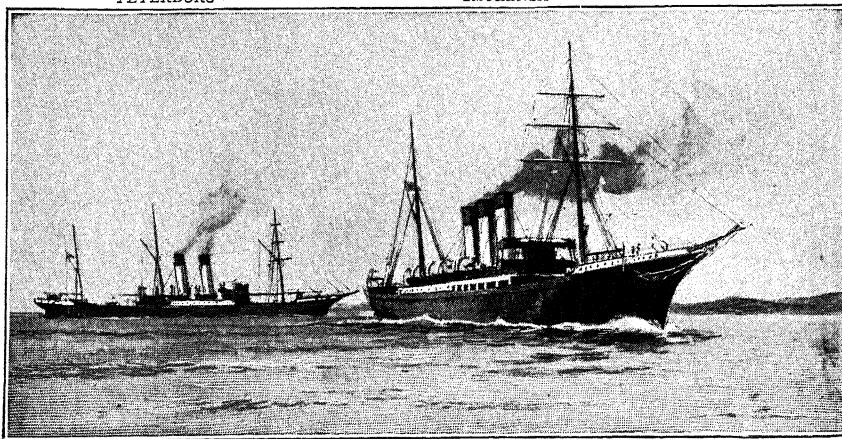
As soon as Captain Dundas has returned to the *Forte* the *Smolensk* and *Peterburg* get under way and stand off to the south. The *Forte* remains watching the pair closely. When they are about seven miles off another steamer is sighted, making for their previous anchorage. She proves to be their collier, and is believed to be the Hamburg-American liner *Holsatia*. She alters her course, and the Russian vessels do the same. When last seen the three vessels are fifteen miles to the west of the south point of Zanzibar. Earnestly is it to be hoped that this is really and absolutely the termination of an episode which has strained the patience of Great Britain most severely, and has added another to the long list of instances in which Russian good faith has not been displayed to sparkling advantage.

Much more might be written concern-

ing the interference of Russia with neutral shipping in the course of the first six or seven months of the war, and there are various cases—those of the *Hipsang*, the *Colchas*, and others—to which attention could be drawn were this intended to be an absolutely comprehensive history. But enough has been said to give a general idea of a development which, however important, becomes a little tedious as the more serious risks connected with it are eliminated. And this is happily what is now being foreshadowed at St. Petersburg as well as in the neighbourhood of Zanzibar. A joint commission representing the Russian Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Marine, with Professor Martens, the eminent jurist, as president, is assembled at the commencement of September to discuss the desirableness of drawing a distinction between absolute and conditional contraband. A few days later their report is handed by Count Lamsdorff to the Tsar, and it is anticipated that a conciliatory reply to both the British and the American Notes will be forthcoming.

PETERBURG

SMOLENSK



THE RAIDERS OF THE RED SEA.

## CHAPTER LIV.

THE ADVANCE ON LIAO-YANG—INTERVENING EVENTS—BIRTH OF THE TSAREVITCH—THE  
TSAR STILL BELLICOSE—RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE POSITIONS—PRELUDE TO THE  
LIAO-YANG BATTLES.

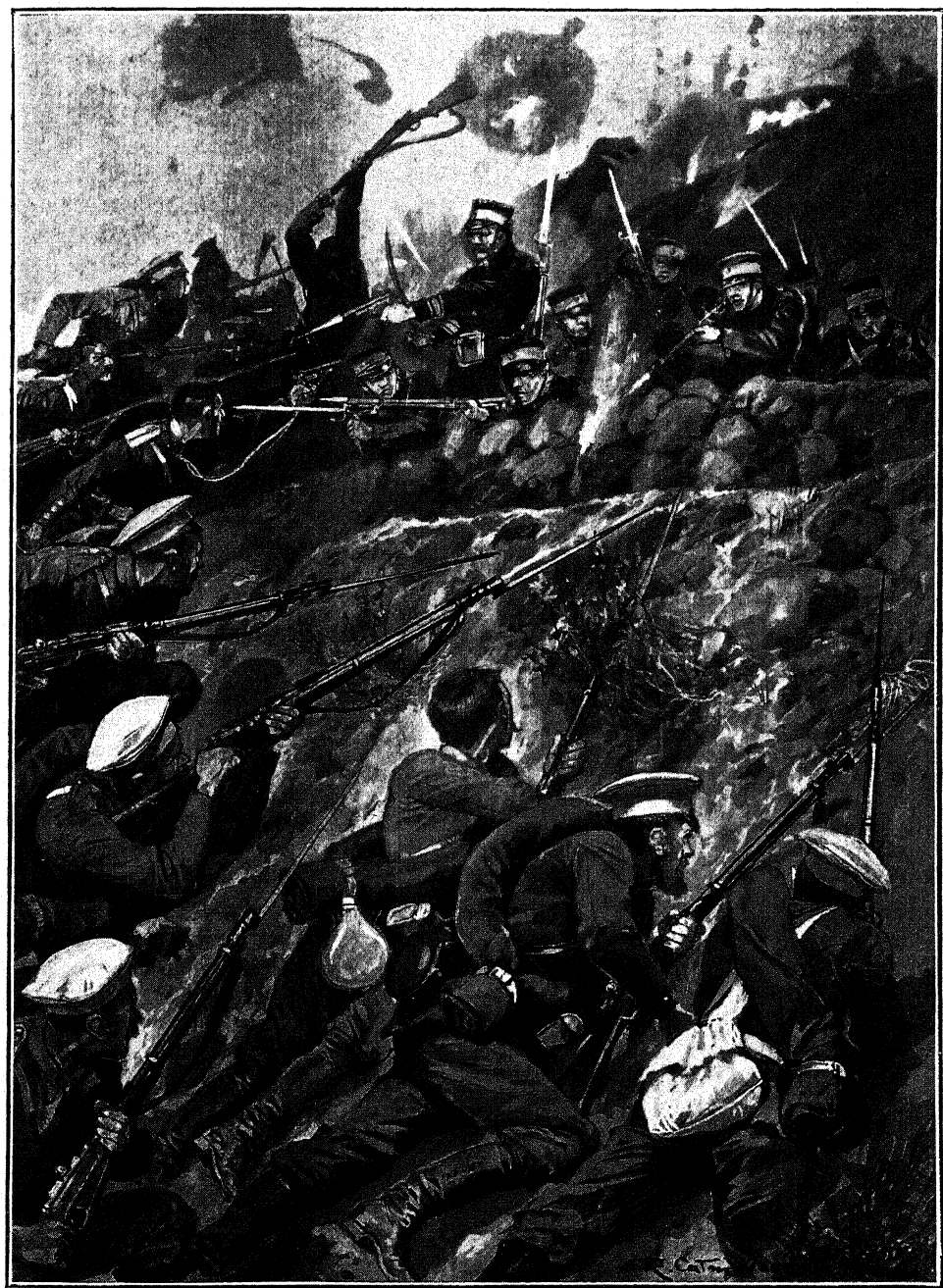
**R**ESUMING our warlike narrative, we find in the early days of August a situation which may remind some of that prison in Edgar Allan Poe's famous story, the walls of which moved inwards a little each day, until eventually the wretched prisoner was crushed between them. It is true that Kuropatkin gives little sign of viewing his surroundings with the frenzy of despair; it is true that the outcome in this case is not so completely tragic as we are led to infer it was in that of Poe's miserable captive. But the process by which the Japanese seek to compass the envelopment of the whole of the main Russian Army is certainly not unlike the mechanism of those ghastly prison walls, and at the period which is now to be dealt with, the prospects of escape, when the machinery shall have done its work, seem almost equally hopeless.

In Chapter XLVIII. we left General Kuroki several valuable and hard-won miles nearer to Liao-yang by reason of the successes of his troops at Yu-shuling-tzu and Yang-tzu-ling. By his occupation of the latter, which is four miles west of Hsihoyen, he is within very easy distance of the Tai-tse-ho, the river which runs through Liao-yang and joins the Hun-ho, which, again, is a larger tributary of the Liao river, and at its upper reaches flows near Mukden. The Takushan Army commanded by General Nozu—often called the Third Army, although the Japanese have not hitherto

used that designation in their official despatches—has advanced to Tomuchan, or, as it appears on some maps, Shimucheng, and is said to be receiving reinforcements, which have been landed at Takushan. General Oku's army has occupied Hai-cheng and the city of Old Niu-chwang, some twelve miles to the west. When we recall the steps by which this arc of a greatly diminished circle has been reached by armies which not long since were at Port Adams, Takushan, and Feng-hwang-cheng respectively, the comparison with Poe's moving prison walls seems to gain in force and accuracy.

The period covered roughly by the first three weeks in August is of importance out of all proportion to the actual operations carried out. These, as will be seen, were not of a very dramatic description, largely owing to the intervention of torrential rains. But they form the prelude to one of the most tremendous conflicts of modern times, and in themselves present several points of interest. In the course of this chapter they will be duly summarised, and, in the meantime, they afford a convenient centre round which to group a number of those incidental details respecting the condition and prospects of the two opposing forces, which have such a special attractiveness in connection with this particular war. For, the deeper one dips into the recorded information concerning this momentous conflict, the

*Shin Watanabe*



**HAND-TO-HAND: RUSSIANS AND JAPANESE AT CLOSE QUARTERS.**

*During the fight at Telissu the Russians crept so close up to the Japanese trenches that in some places neither side could use their rifles, owing to an intervening rise in the ground. Finally, the Japanese began to hurl down stones upon their adversaries.*





more frequently is one reminded of the epoch-making difference between it and any other previous campaign. Crowded as it is with naval and military lessons of special value at a transitional period in the history of warfare, it is even more closely packed with that human interest which is often more conspicuous in the settlement of great political and racial questions than it is in the actual conduct of warlike operations.

Do we seek an instance? It is here ready to our hand, and the manner of its introduction is peculiarly human. In the second week of August, when the main armies of the Tsar and the Mikado are "jockeying for their places" in what, it is thought, may prove a decisive contest; when, for the first time, the Russian and Japanese Commanders-in-Chief are set against one another in a definite trial of wits; when soldiers fresh from Europe are beginning to know what it feels to come to hand grips with the once despised yellowskin; when almost daily within five and twenty miles of Liao-yang is to be heard the rattle of musketry that tells of an affair of outposts or an encounter of patrols—there appears on the scene at St. Petersburg a person of little weight but of much consequence, who may come to have a greater influence upon the course of the war than Kuropatkin or Oyama themselves. There is more human interest attached to the arrival at this juncture on the stage of the world's affairs of a certain small baby boy than there is in the storming of Nan-shan or the sortie of ships from Port Arthur. Perhaps it may transpire that, even in naval and military significance, and even in relation to this very war, the tiny Tsarevitch's coming may prove to be of the three events the one of greatest import.

Since the second Nicholas of the House of Romanoff married, in 1894, our Queen Victoria's granddaughter, Princess Alix of Hesse, four daughters had been born to the devoted Imperial couple, but never an Heir. The Heir Presumptive to the Throne of All the Russias was still the Grand Duke Michael, and to a deeply superstitious people it seemed as if the blessing of Heaven did not lie upon a union which was yet known to be marked by notable domestic happiness. It was an open secret that the Tsar and Tsarina—the latter a particularly sympathetic figure in English eyes—felt deeply the untoward growth of this unfortunate development of Russian sentiment. It is whispered, that in the case of the Tsar, the actual fear lest the absence of a direct male Heir to the Throne portended grave Divine displeasure produced at times a serious despondency, tending to vagaries which would have suited the soothsayer-led kings of early Egypt better than they did the latterday court of a European monarch. But the Tsar's helpless confidence in spiritualist and other counsellors was soon obscured by the concentrated interest of the civilised world in the announcement that a fifth Imperial baby was expected. On August 12th the event took place, and the birth of a Tsarevitch plunged the Russian Empire into joy, and evoked the most sincere and lively satisfaction throughout Europe.

At the front, it is needless to say, the joyful news is received with a genuine burst of enthusiasm by the Russian troops, partly out of honest loyalty to the Tsar, partly by reason of the superstitious idea above alluded to. Kuropatkin in person parades the troops, and expresses a hope that, as an appropriate

sequel to the event, he will soon lead the Russian Army to victory. At Port Arthur the tidings are similarly honoured, and even in the dock at Shanghai one of the battered survivors of the naval action of two days before takes appropriate notice of the realisation of the Empire's heart-felt wish. The cruiser *Askold*, sorely damaged as she is, and on the point of being dismantled, and so for the time ceasing to have a recognised existence as a man-of-war, "dresses ship" and covers her crippled spars with gay bunting in honour of the little Tsarevitch.

Yet who shall say that the new Heir to the Russian Throne comes altogether as an evangel, even to the Empire in which he has been received with such a vociferous welcome? His advent makes for unquestioned good in some directions, for the shadow of an alienation between the crowned heads of a mighty people and the people themselves, whatever the basis on which it rests, is a grievous thing. It may be even a terrible thing in a land where, arrayed against the forces of despotism and bureaucracy, are those of a desperate socialism, which acknowledges no law save that of successful violence. The pardons and amnesties which follow the birth of the happy Tsar's baby son not only are the gracious expression of a kindlier feeling, more especially towards the Finlanders, who have lately been far from basking in the sunshine of Imperial favour, but may be productive of future better feeling in hundreds of remote corners of the Tsar's dominions. The divinity that doth hedge a Russian Autocrat, God-favoured by an Heir, is great. But even in ignorance-sodden Russia there is a growing appreciation of the Tsar's power to better ordinary conditions of life by the per-

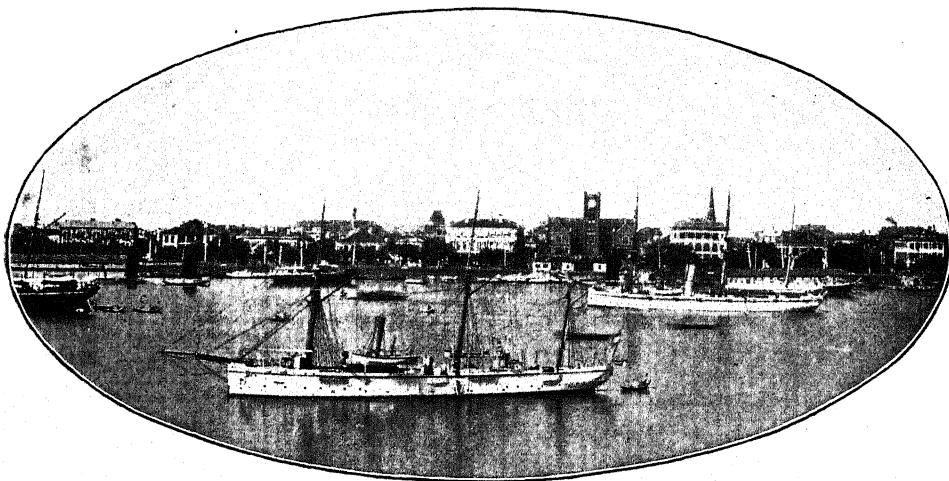
formance of very ordinary acts of administrative goodness.

But as to the war, alas, the infant Tsarevitch's influence is not likely to be beneficial. Quite the contrary. The fear of Heavenly indignation has passed from his Imperial sire, and it would seem that his warlike purpose has been stiffened by an event which, from a kindlier human standpoint, would have inspired hope of peaceful counsels. This view receives striking confirmation at the christening of the Tsarevitch, to whom our own King Edward, bound to the Tsar by close family ties, stands sponsor. The King sends as his representative to St. Petersburg Rear-Admiral Prince Louis of Battenberg, who, doubtless by his Majesty's desire, is said to have alluded in conversation with the Tsar to the possibility of peace in the near future between Russia and Japan. The reported sequel is impressive. Standing up, and with a deliberation which induced the belief that the utterance was meant to be repeated, the Tsar said solemnly, "As long as a Russian soldier remains standing, and there is a rouble left in the Imperial Treasury, I shall continue this war against the Japanese, who forced me to take up arms. There are no disasters in the field that can move me from this resolution."

With Nicholas II. in this anything but pacific frame of mind, it may be imagined that both in Russia and at the front an active state of warlike preparation continues. We have seen that these efforts, even in the short period under review, are being discounted by the naval successes of Admiral Togo and Admiral Kamimura, and perhaps still more by Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky's fatuous mistake in bringing the bulk of the main Russian Fleet back to Port Arthur. But

Russia can still hope to retrieve on land what she has lost at sea, and there is little doubt that now her machinery of military reinforcement is beginning to

sults in this direction ; but it may once again be recalled, that at a very early stage of this narrative the military possibilities connected with the region in



SHANGHAI HARBOUR.

work with far greater smoothness than it has done until quite recently. As will be seen when we come to dissect the operations round Liao-yang, the number of men at Kuropatkin's disposal is larger than is supposed by some who have calculated the rate of his possible reinforcement with mathematical precision. We have no means of knowing exactly what troops are now being conveyed by the Siberian Railway, or how they are being disposed on arrival at Harbin. But there is a growing conviction that slowly but surely Russia, in the matter of reinforcement, is beginning to make real headway, and that before long she will be in a position not only to meet General Kuropatkin's requirements, but to provide a reserve, which will enable movements to be made if necessary in support of, or in alternation with, those of the main army. It is as yet premature to anticipate re-

which Vladivostok is the chief point were carefully indicated. Whatever may be the result, these possibilities still exist, and are by no means entirely dissociated from the position round Liao-yang.

It may be said that, if this be so, the Russians are acting foolishly, since concentration is the end and aim of tactics, and generally of strategy also. Moreover, with the example of Port Arthur to guide them, it would be strange if the Russians made the similar mistake of locking up a number of troops at Vladivostok. But there is no question of locking up troops here, merely one of utilising a second military centre which, it must always be remembered, has two very distinct advantages over Port Arthur. It has not behind it an isthmus only a few miles wide like that at Kinchau, and it has communication not only

with Harbin by the Siberian Railway, but also by rail with Khabarovsk on that great stream the Amur, down which thousands of Russian soldiers can be, and have aforesaid been, floated on rafts. Attention is here called to these dim possibilities, because they constitute a background to the operations round Liao-yang which may be a little hazy at present, but is not without suggestiveness.

Whether there is or is not a disposition on the part of Russia to endeavour to have for the future "something up her sleeve" is, however, for the moment a matter of secondary importance. The supreme question is, will Kuropatkin fight at Liao-yang, and, if so, how is he prepared to resist the skilful and industrious attempts which the Japanese are making to envelope him? He is known to be withdrawing a quantity of stores and war material from Liao-yang to Mukden and Harbin, and yet he remains in very great force round the first-named, which he has strongly fortified, and where there still remains a large accumulation of supplies. We may

anticipate the future to the extent of saying that Kuropatkin does mean to fight at Liao-yang, and that he will not leave it by any means with such readiness as has characterised the withdrawals from the various points in the Liao-tung Peninsula and, more recently, from Ta-shi-chao and Hai-cheng. The position at Liao-yang has all along constituted a definite point from which it was not intended to recede unless under pressure amounting to forcible expulsion, and this

view of its purposes is about to be justified.

There is much to admire in two aspects of the Russian scheme of operations up to and including this prelude to the Liao-yang fighting. We have to bear in mind that, having been compelled against his will to adventure a considerable portion of this force in an insane attempt to relieve Port Arthur, General Kuropatkin was thrown out of all his calculations on the

subject of reinforcement, and might have been taken at a serious disadvantage had he been attacked by the combined armies of Oku, Nozu, and Kuroki, before he had time to make up the deficit



Photo: A. Pasetti, St. Petersburg.

THE TSARINA IN FULL COURT DRESS.

caused by the disastrous defeat of Telissu. Here, doubtless, is the explanation of the series of rear-guard actions fought by the tail of what was once General Stackelberg's fine force. Although those actions meant a loss which, in the aggregate, amounted to some thousands, they also meant the gain of a good many days, during which reinforcements were coming in steadily; and Kuropatkin, although still far from having the crushing superiority to which he has aspired, is in a far better position to meet his triune adversary than he would have been nearly two months ago. For Telissu was fought on June 15th, and, unopposed, General Oku might have found it a matter of not much more than a fortnight to reach Hai-cheng, which he does not, as it is, occupy till August 3rd. Although Kuropatkin cannot yet say that he, like Fabius, *cunctando restituit rem*, it is now possible to see that, if he had not given his commanders in the south orders to render General Oku's advance as difficult as possible, he might have been long ago either forced to give battle at a most serious disadvantage, or to beat a really inglorious retreat.

Indeed, by way of parenthesis, one can hardly help thinking—and the elaborate defensive preparations made at Ta-shi-chao, for instance, support this view—that at one time Kuropatkin hoped that he would have been able to delay the union of the three Japanese Armies sufficiently to render a combined attack impossible before winter set in. This would have enabled him to hold Kuroki alone until the great Russian Army, 400,000 strong, which is believed to represent Kuropatkin's estimate of the requirements of the situation, had been collected for the purpose of a great offensive. But Japanese method and per-

sistence have at least shattered any such dream as this for the present. The columns have converged, if not with the same precision, or to such a restricted area, as at Königgrätz, with much the same practical result as far as the menaced adversary is concerned. A fight may not be inevitable, but the invitation is, at any rate, so pressing, that Kuropatkin does not, in short, decline it when the time comes, a little later, for him to fight or run.

The other feather temporarily in Russia's cap is the stubborn defence of Port Arthur. This, in due course, will be dealt with in detail separately, but it is essential to note here what singular good service the Port Arthur garrison is rendering the Russian Commander-in-Chief by their heroic resistance. Kuropatkin would doubtless be very pleased to have with him the five-and-twenty thousand or so gallant fighters who are holding Port Arthur so nobly against the almost frantic efforts of a powerful adversary. But the reinforcement would cost him dear if it involved the release of the 100,000 Japanese who are now, it is said, lying about the beleaguered fortress. Had the defence not been conducted with superb skill and gallantry, the entire garrison might by this time have been annihilated, and perhaps some 60,000 men added in a couple of weeks to General Oku's Army. Well may the Russians be proud of a tenacity which has served them so well at such a critical juncture, and which may come to have a yet more important influence upon the future of the land campaign.

Turning now to the Japanese, we have naturally to reverse the conditions under which Russia has gained some advantage by the retarding of General Oku's advance, and the detention of a large in-

vesting force round Port Arthur. There is no question that, as regards the latter, the Japanese are by no means pleased with the turn which affairs have taken. There is reason to believe that they counted confidently on reducing Port Arthur before they proceeded to the attempted envelopment of Kuropatkin at Liao-yang. It is true that their machinery has not been by any means thrown out of gear by this unexpected check, and the mere circumstance that they can carry on the siege of Port Arthur and threaten the main army of the enemy concurrently, and with such apparent ease, is in itself a singular tribute of their foresight in providing against mishaps. But it is a grave matter that an operation of such magnitude as the reduction of Port Arthur should be delayed week after week, and that, after two months of desperate fighting, during which the losses of the attackers may well have been in proportion to the numerical superiority of the latter, the fortress should still be holding out manfully. The Japanese shopkeepers at Tokio have probably packed away the lanterns and other decorations with which quite a long time since they were preparing to celebrate the fall of the fortress whose very existence as a Russian stronghold touches Japanese sentiment so deeply. Marshal Oyama himself has left the siege operations in order to direct the operations against Liao-yang. But this, we may be sure, is not the measure of Japan's disappointment at the postponement of what seemed a certain triumph in view of the singular success of the preliminary steps taken to procure it. The complete defeat of Kuropatkin at Liao-yang might render the siege at Port Arthur an operation which could be completed almost at leisure, with a fraction

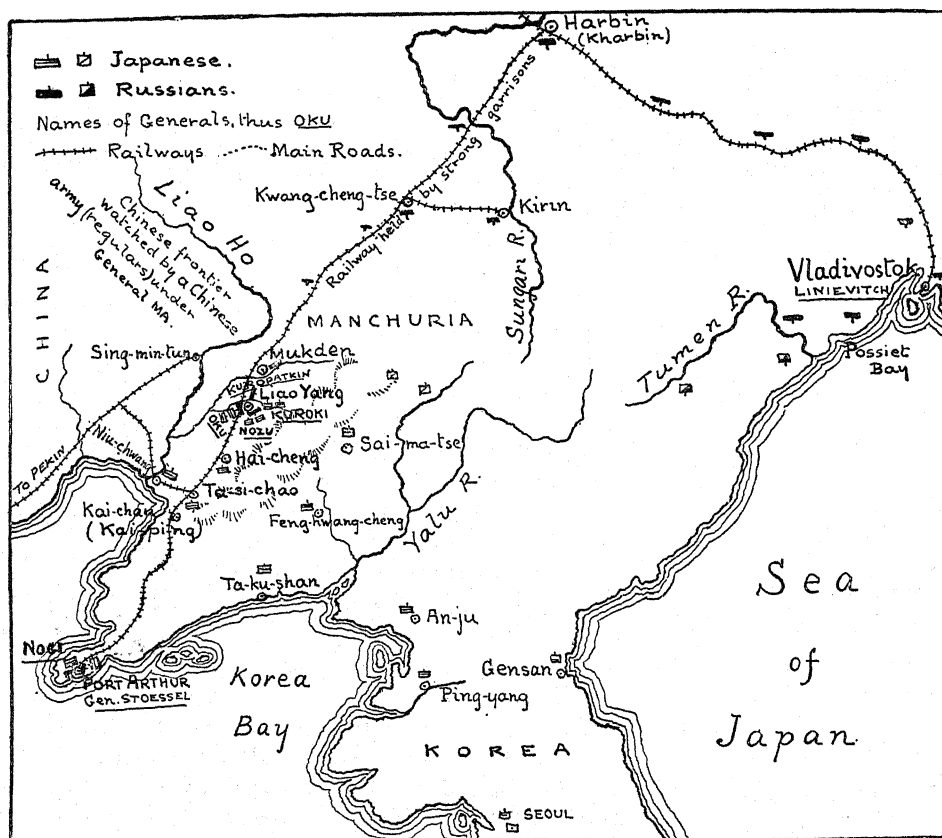
of the sacrifices now being incurred. But Kuropatkin has not yet been completely defeated, and the Japanese General Staff has shown itself from the first by no means so premature in counting unhatched chickens as the confident little Tokio shopkeeper.

As to the northward march of Oku's Army, it is easy to see that this might have been notably expedited—was doubtless intended to be expedited—by the release of the bulk of the force investing Port Arthur. At the same time, it is thought by some advanced critics that, as has been hinted at one or two stages of the fighting in the Liao-tung Peninsula, Oku might have been in position at Hai-cheng some weeks earlier, Port Arthur or no Port Arthur, had he been a little less methodical, less Teutonic in his movements. There is no gainsaying the advantages of thoroughness in warfare, as in most other things, but it is possible to be too thorough. There is a good story told of a British and a German detachment which were detailed during the international operations in China to capture a Chinese village. The forces marched by different routes, and there was no special agreement as to a rendezvous. The German commander was resolved to leave nothing to chance, and his arrangements for the capture of that doomed village were quite convincing in their completeness. He had well-nigh surrounded the place, and was about to give the final word to attack, when an object was discerned on one of the roofs, which caused an immediate "stay of execution." It was merely the British flag, planted by the British detachment which had arrived and entered the village hours before!

It is, perhaps rather unfairly and unkindly, suggested that, if Oku had been

a little less anxious to make good his foothold each time he drove the Russians from one of their positions, he might have saved himself some trouble, and have gained some precious weeks in bringing himself up in line with the First and Takushan Armies, by adopting a

beaten enemy moving, particularly one so skilled in rear-guard operations as Russia. Had Oku swept victoriously onward he would probably have prevented the Russian rear-guard from re-forming repeatedly and showing its teeth, and this alone would have saved the Japanese



SKETCH MAP SHOWING POSITIONS OF THE RIVAL ARMIES AT THE END OF AUGUST, 1904.

more go-ahead style of movement. With him there was no necessity to steady his rate of advance; on the contrary, there was much advantage in pushing forward, even if Kuroki and Nozu had not been so ready, as they clearly were, to take up their parts in the combined movement. For there is great virtue in keeping a

some hundreds of good fighting men. But such criticism must be tempered with the reflection that Oku may have had to contend with difficulties, more especially as regards supplies, of which we, owing to the Japanese censorship and the fact that the bulk of the correspondents were with Kuroki's Army, know nothing.



MR. MACHUGH,  
*Daily Telegraph.*

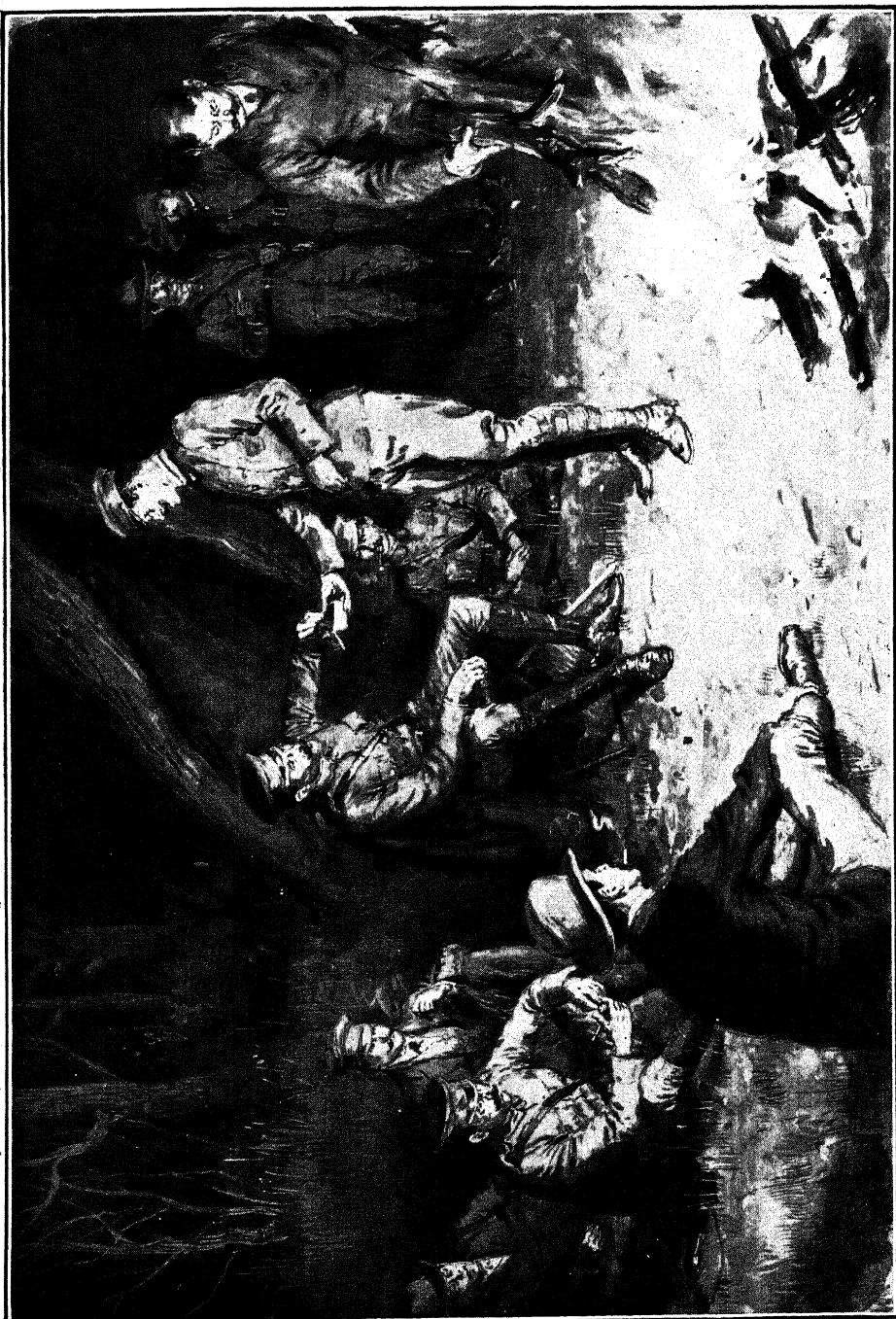
MR. KIRTON,  
*Graphic.*

SIR IAN HAMILTON

MR. KNIGHT,  
*Morning Post.*

COLONEL HUME,  
*Military Attaché, Tokio*

MR. MAXWELL,  
*Standard.*



LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON, BRITISH ATTACHÉ, AS GUEST OF THE BRITISH WAR CORRESPONDENTS AT PENG-HWANG-CHENG.

Again, it is easy to see that the positive advantages which Japan has gained, partly, perhaps, by reason of this same deliberation of movement, are very substantial. There is little doubt that in the matter of the Liao-tung Peninsula the Japanese are looking ahead much in the same way as in the case of Korea, although necessarily the precautions to be taken are of a different character. The railway running down to Port Arthur is to Liao-tung in the present what the railway in course of construction from Seoul to Wi-ju will be to Korea in the future, and we may be sure that, with each successive stage of Oku's advance to the north, something has been done to confirm Japan's control of this main artery of communication. It is suggested, and the idea is a probable one, that as the Japanese proceed they are altering the gauge of the line to enable their own light rolling stock to move along it, and at the same time to render future use by the Russians impossible without alterations, which would take a long time.

It may be remarked in passing, that possibly here we have the inception of a very large and far-sighted scheme for the permanent aggrandisement of Japan and the permanent hindrance of Russian supremacy in the Far East. For it seems that, in addition to the Seoul-Wi-ju line, the Japanese have been constructing a light railway from An-tung, on the opposite side of the Yalu, to Wi-ju, in the direction of Feng-hwang-cheng. Presumably, in due course, this is intended to be carried on to Liao-yang. Now, if the Japanese can alter the gauge of the Manchurian Railway up to Liao-yang, the latter would be a possible junction for narrow gauge systems both in Liao-tung and Korea, in the working of which

Japan, if victorious in this war, could easily retain a dominating influence. At the same time a break of gauge, even at Liao-yang, would of itself be an apt reminder of the passing of Russian supremacy in this quarter. This is looking very far ahead, but "long shots" are necessary in order to understand a good deal of Japan's silent strategy.

Another advantage which the thorough and methodical operations of General Oku, prior to his arrival at Hai-cheng, have conferred upon the Japanese, is the complete control of the Liao River from the mouth up to Old Niu-chwang. With the latter, as well as the Port of Niu-chwang (Ying-kau), in Japanese hands, the supply system of the Second Army has already been greatly simplified, and this additional line of communication will doubtless prove of still more extended value in the future, when a temporary concentration further north than Hai-cheng takes place.

It is now time to turn our attention to the actual operations south and west of Liao-yang during the first three weeks of August. It will simplify our comprehension of these if we commence by borrowing from the *Times* a few observations by an evidently well-informed correspondent on "Summer Conditions and Food Supplies in Manchuria." From this important source of information it appears that there is a considerable difference in the circumstances of Kuroki's Army and those of the other two armies under Nozu and Oku respectively. The hilly region north and west of Feng-hwang-cheng is much healthier and much better supplied, at any rate as regards cereals, bean-cake—on which horses thrive—and fuel. "It should be well understood," says the writer of this article, "that there are two harvest

seasons in Manchuria. The first is that of wheat and barley, which in the central and southern provinces ripens at the end of June or early in July, immediately before the usual summer rains; whereas in the northern provinces it follows the rainy season, being cut towards the end of August. The second or greater harvest commences in the extreme south in September, and later as one advances northwards; around Harbin, for instance, about the first week in October."

A good deal depends, of course, on these rather variegated conditions; but, speaking generally, it may be inferred that until Liao-yang is reached, General Kuroki is more happily placed than either of the other two Japanese generals, or than Kuropatkin, since he not only has a fertile country from which to draw supplies, but is less affected than they are by the alternations of summer heat and rain. "The roads from Feng-hwang-cheng, whether north to Tie-ling or Mukden, west to Liao-yang and Hai-cheng, or even to Siu-yen, Ta-ku-shan, and the (Liao-tung) Promontory, are the best in Manchuria for summer traffic. After a heavy and continuous rain certain streams cannot be crossed, but the water usually sinks rapidly, and boggy places are rare, and when found, could be easily made passable. All through the summer heavily-laden native carts travel to Mukden, Liao-yang, Hai-cheng, and Kai-ping." All this seems to favour, though it may not account for, the fact that in the operations against Liao-yang, the forces under the immediate control of General Kuroki take from start to finish a leading part. Yet even these must have been hampered both by the rain and by very tall crops of millet, to the tactical importance of which, as screens, attention was drawn in Chapter XXXIV.

On the other hand, it is important to remember that the intelligence and industry with which this fertile region is cultivated by the Chinese is of great advantage to Russia also, as long as she holds the great grain region east and north of Harbin; for, provided she can import a fair quantity of hay from the west, she can, at any rate, feed her immense number of horses and animals on beans and other food obtainable in quantities locally. Again, as regards the meat supplies which are available, and which come almost entirely from Mongolia, the Russians at present have the chief control.

Hai-cheng, it will be recalled, was occupied by General Oku on August 3rd, and on the following day his advanced guard was ten miles to the north of that important position. Meanwhile, the Russians have been falling back also before General Kuroki's forces, and on the 6th we hear of them five miles from the Japanese in the Motien-ling, but with a larger encampment at An-ping, only twelve miles south-east of Liao-yang. About this period—the date is uncertain, but the affair appears to be an early sequel to the Yang-tsu-ling fight on July 31st—the Japanese score a very decided success at the Chobaidai Pass, ten miles from the Motien-ling. A brigade of the centre column races two Russian regiments for the possession of the summit of the pass, which commands the Russian flank. The Japanese get there first, and, seizing an overhanging cliff, they fire upon the ascending Russians, of whom they kill about a thousand in a few minutes, with a loss to themselves of only twelve.

On August 4th a great fall of rain takes place at Liao-yang, and for some days the roads in the immediate neigh-

bourhood are transformed into marshes. A spell of torrid heat follows, with the thermometer standing at 120 deg. Fahr. At Liao-yang itself there are many wounded—Colonel Gädke, the correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt*, has been allowed by the censor to state this fact—and there is a growing apprehension as to General Kuroki's movements. It may also be mentioned, in passing, that on August 6th not only Kuropatkin, but Alexeieff is at Liao-yang. The object of the Viceroy's visit is not recorded, but it may well have reference to the enormous quantities of military stores which have been accumulated at Liao-yang, and which now are evidently in some danger. It is estimated by the Russian Press that this accumulation amounts to upwards of a million poods (a pood is about 36 lbs.), and the opinion is freely expressed that the destruction or loss of these resources would be equivalent to the loss of a battle.

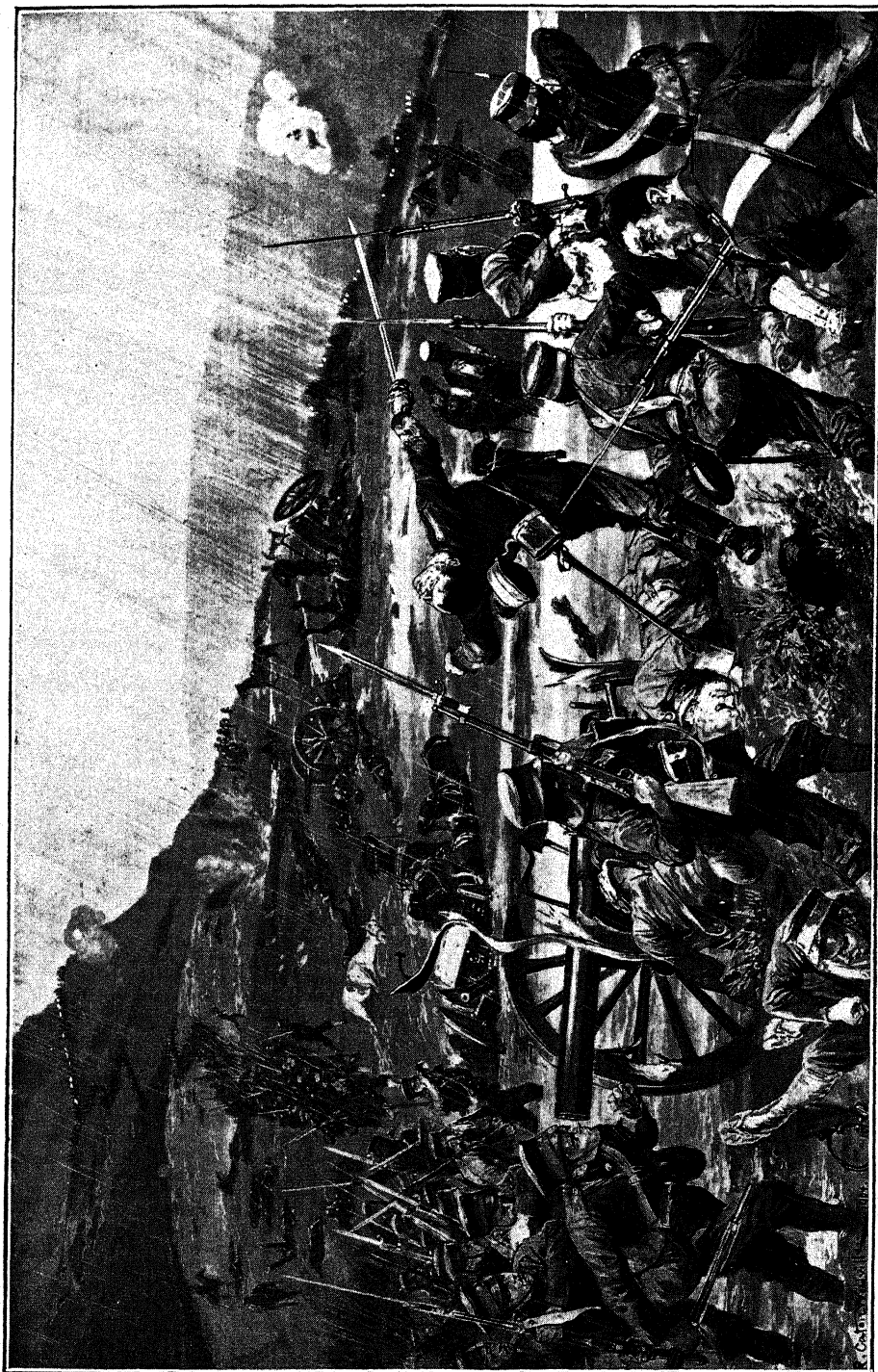
At the close of the first week in August the operations appear to have come once more to the same sort of standstill as followed each of the principal Japanese successes during the past seven or eight weeks. To the south of Liao-yang General Oku is still a few miles north of Hai-cheng, with the Russians confronting him at An-shan-chan. Between Liao-yang and the Motien-ling the chief Russian advanced position is at An-ping. Some thirty miles to the east of Liao-yang the Japanese are in considerable force on the left bank of the Tai-tse River, but are at present unable to cross the river owing to the presence of Russian detachments at Pen-si-hu on the right bank, which are stubbornly defending the fords. A few days later it is reported from Liao-yang that the Russo-Chinese Bank is moving to Tie-ling.

The women and children have already left. It is rather symptomatic of the state of affairs that some rich Chinese, anticipating the Japanese entry into Liao-yang, should now be addressing letters to Generals Oku and Kuroki placing houses at their disposal.

During the ensuing week the principal development is a display of strangely marked activity among the Chunchuses, the bandits whose hostility to Russia was noticed at a very early stage of this narrative. These troublesome rogues under, it is said, Japanese leadership, are now very much in evidence in the region of the Liao River above Niu-chwang, and have even been bold enough to attack the railway between Liao-yang and An-shan-chan.

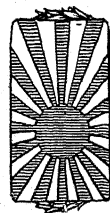
At the close of the second week in August the rains have commenced again, and, beyond daily affairs of outposts, there is not much movement. The Russians have been a good deal heartened by the announcement of the birth of the Tsarevitch, and general satisfaction is expressed at the infant Prince's appointment to the Colonelcy-in-Chief of the 12th Siberian Regiment, which took a very gallant part in the Battle of Kiu-lien-cheng and in all the recent fights with General Kuroki's Army, including that of July 31st.

On August 18th the *Times* correspondent with General Kuroki's Army telegraphs that, after four days' disastrous rain, which has rendered both rivers and roads impracticable, the weather has dried, but continues threatening. He adds that the Japanese camp has been much disturbed by the presence of several Russian soldiers hiding in the cornfields. In other directions there is evidence that, practically speaking, contact exists between the opposing forces



**JAPAN'S IRRESISTIBLE ADVANCE.**

*A fight in the rain: The Japanese driving the Russians from the mountain passes south-east of Kaiping.*



along the whole line from about An-shan-chan through An-ping to the Tai-tse-ho, and, between advanced parties, at points beyond these. Evidently the great collision cannot now be long delayed, and we may be sure that on both sides there is the keenest eagerness to bring matters to a clear issue, and put an end to a trying period of suspense.

Such is the state of affairs up to about August 23rd, when the situation round Liao-yang begins to take a new shape, and we enter upon the contemplation of one of the most terrific struggles the world has ever seen. In subsequent chapters each phase of this great conflict will be carefully dealt with, and many no doubt will prefer to study it as an independent set of operations. But, none the less, much of the real interest of the fighting round Liao-yang lies in the preliminary stages by which the armies of Kuroki, Nozu, and Oku have gradually been brought up from Korea,

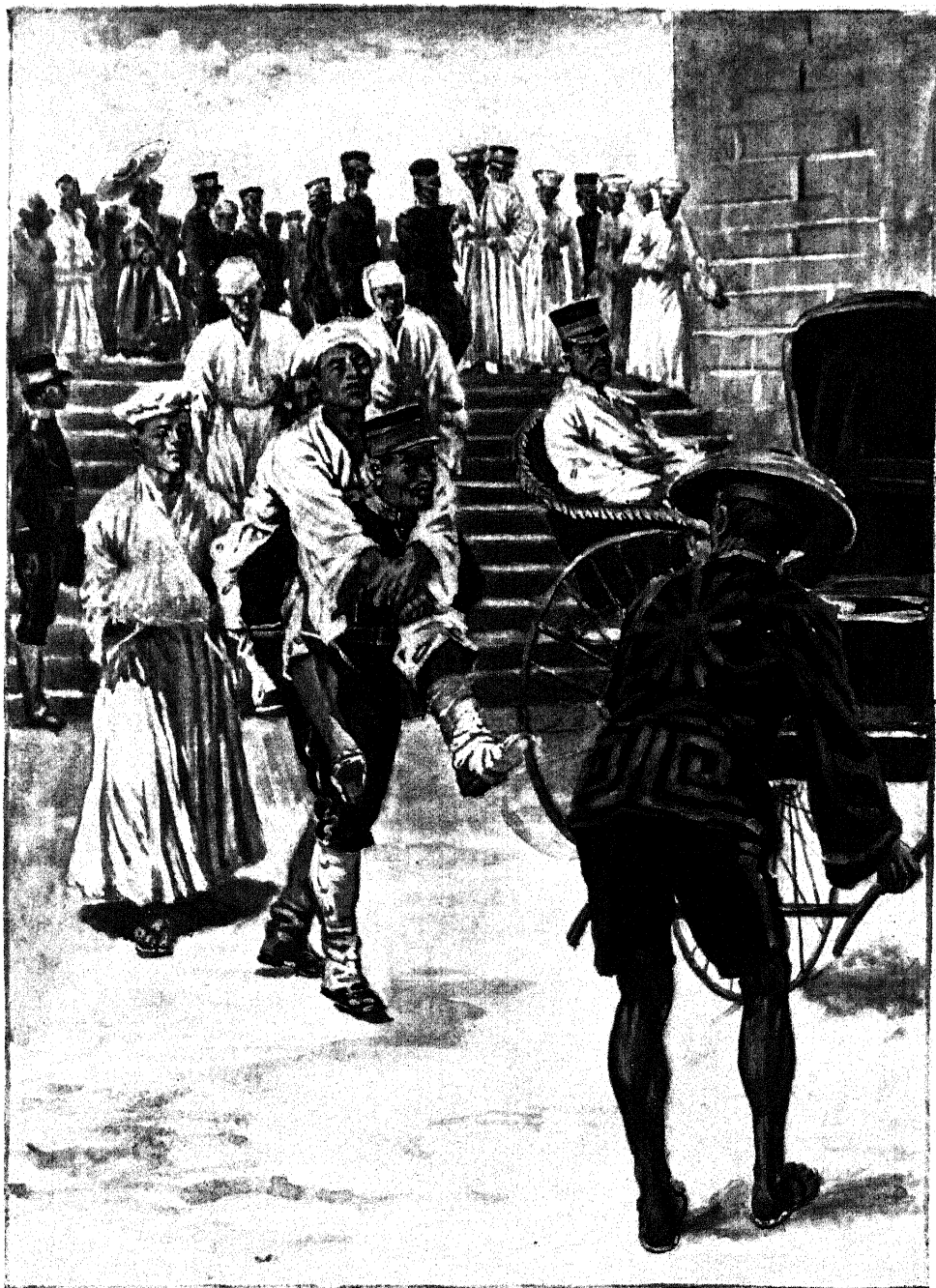
Takushan, and the Liao-tung Peninsula respectively, to the accompaniment of much hard fighting and unremitting labour. There is, too, something deeply attractive in the spectacle of Kuropatkin anxiously striving to improve what he must have known from the first to be a situation full of risks. In the near future we shall see both the pushful industry of the Japanese and the monumental patience of Kuropatkin to some extent rewarded, and in the storm and stress of a historic series of battles much of what has gone before may be forgotten. But the true lessons of the Liao-yang operations can never be fairly grasped by those who have not studied the antecedent strategy of the Japanese, or who fail to appreciate Kuropatkin's masterly consolidation of a force, impotent, it is true, to stem the enemy's advance, but sufficient, at least temporarily, to save Russia from irreparable disaster.



*Photo: Nouvelle, Paris.*

RUSSIANS REQUISITIONING MULES FROM THE CHINESE WHEN IN OCCUPATION OF NIU-CHWANG.





WOUNDED SOLDIERS ARRIVING IN TOKIO IN THE COMFORTABLE KIMONO  
OF THE FAR EAST.





## CHAPTER LV.

THE HISTORIC BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG—RUSSIAN ADVANCED POSITIONS—JAPANESE STRATEGY—KUROKI'S THREE COLUMNS—CAPTURE OF THE TANG-HO POSITION—OKU AND NOZU ADVANCE—RUSSIANS EVACUATE AN-SHAN-CHAN—FIRST PHASE ENDED.

ON August 23rd, 1904, the curtain rises on an act which for thrilling interest spread over a wide expanse of country, for eager devotion animating huge masses of fighting men, for restless activity extending over a long space of time, has an almost unique fascination. Unfortunately these attributes are somewhat to the disadvantage of one who essays to make popular history of a great and complicated military operation. In a case like this a bird's-eye view is impossible, and generalities would be hopelessly misleading. At a dozen different points quite distinct aspects present themselves. Only here and there can the connection between the working of this body of troops and that be traced without cautious explanation. Even the landscape is strongly variegated. Here a river with level banks "comes cranking in"; there a line of steep hills stands out sharply against the sky. Bare precipices alternate with immense patches of cultivation, and from day to day violent changes in the weather produce further bewildering combinations. No composite picture will ever do justice to the battle, or, to speak with precision, the closely linked series of battles, of Liao-yang.

On the other hand, this tremendous conflict will undoubtedly, as time goes on, and full information as to details shall have become available, prove to be curiously crowded with isolated incidents

such as will give full scope to either the pictorial or the literary artist. Some of these incidents will be found dealt with in the ensuing narrative. But it may be years before any but a very incomplete idea can be gained of the countless minor acts of heroism and endurance which go to make up the sum of this ten days of continuous fighting. Indeed, one could hardly expect it to be otherwise, since, even as to the larger movements on both sides, there are tongues yet to be loosed, records yet to be laid bare. The pride of Russia, the reticence of Japan may, for a whole generation, veil much that it would be deeply interesting to know concerning strategical plans and tactical developments.

With all this abundance, with all these limitations, the operation about to be described has one claim to special attention to which it is well, perhaps, to draw emphatic notice before we proceed to the discussion of the actual course of events. There are not a great many battles in history which can truly be described as historical events, and Liao-yang is unmistakably one of them. It was not decisive, but it has none the less left an indelible mark; and the mere fact that the object of the victors was not fully accomplished has an instructiveness, the extent of which can hardly at present be realised. It may be possible to deal later with the historical aspect of the Liao-yang fighting as regards results, but its antecedents

alone, as lightly sketched in the preceding narrative, are sufficient to show that genuine history, as well as tactics, is involved in the study of this battle. For here we have the culmination of the first definite attempt in modern times of an Eastern nation literally to overwhelm the main field army of a European Power. If the reader carries that reflection along with him, as in imagination he charges with the glorious infantry of Japan, or falls back stubbornly contesting every step with the splendidly tenacious Russian rear-guards, every incident will take a graver meaning, every sacrifice will become more significantly picturesque.

After this brief introduction let us endeavour to realise the position and strength of the opposing forces on the date, August 23rd, on which the first phase of the Battle of Liao-yang may be said to commence. In order to escape the necessity for repeated explanations, it may be well at this point to state, that for the purpose of this narrative the fighting before, at, and beyond Liao-yang will be considered as a Battle of three Phases, one lasting from August 23rd to 28th inclusive, the next from August 29th to 31st, and the third from September 1st to 3rd. It may also be remarked that, although the Japanese after the earliest stage of the fighting had been concluded expressed an intention to speak of their three armies in future as the Right and Left Wings and the Centre, this division will not be strictly adhered to here. The assignment of three distinct forces to Generals Kuroki, Nozu, and Oku has become a familiar arrangement, and, as no inaccuracy is involved by adhering to it a little longer, it will be preserved except in cases where the new designation tends to greater simplicity.

On August 23rd the Russian position in front of Liao-yang had a total extent of about forty miles. The extreme right was at An-shan-chan, some twenty miles to the south-west of Liao-yang, and close to the railway. From An-shan-chan the line of defences ran eastward to Kao-feng-shu; thence in a north-easterly direction to the immediate east of An-ping; and finally to the Tai-tse-ho. The position and course of the latter stream, which runs past Liao-yang and joins the Hun-ho, a tributary of the Liao River, should be attentively studied on the map. It will be noted that about ten miles east of Liao-yang the Tai-tse receives an affluent, the Tang-ho, on the right bank of which, to the south-west of Liao-yang, lies An-ping.

In this outer chain the Russians have only two, or at most three, chief positions, that at An-shan-chan, that near Kao-feng-shu, and that—the most important of all—in front of An-ping. The latter may be termed the Tang-ho position, and consisted of a line of steep hills running in a south-westerly direction from Hun-sha-ling. This position was strongly fortified, and is said to have been defended by 120 guns, and held by 65,000 men. The whole of the 10th Army Corps was here, and half of the 17th, with other troops, including the mountaineer contingent from the Caucasus.

The position near Kao-feng-shu appears to have been closely linked up with that to the east of the Tang-ho, about an army corps, perhaps, being distributed among the highlands in this quarter. On the Russian right the position at An-shan-chan was one of great natural strength, a saddle-backed hill which commanded the surrounding plain being utilised, and the line of entrenchments being stiffened by semi-permanent fortifications.

It must not be supposed that Kuropatkin's entire force was engaged in occupying this chain of advanced positions. At least one army corps was held in reserve beyond Liao-yang, and the number of troops in and immediately around the town itself was very considerable. And hereby hangs a tale by no means creditable to the Russian Army, and one which goes far to explain the actual sequel. According to Reuter's correspondent at Liao-yang, who did not accompany the

quarters could be heard the clink of glasses and the tinkle of musical boxes." As a shrewd observer remarks, the *coulisses* of a Russian Army are seldom edifying, but it would seem that in this case a very high pitch of shameless in-

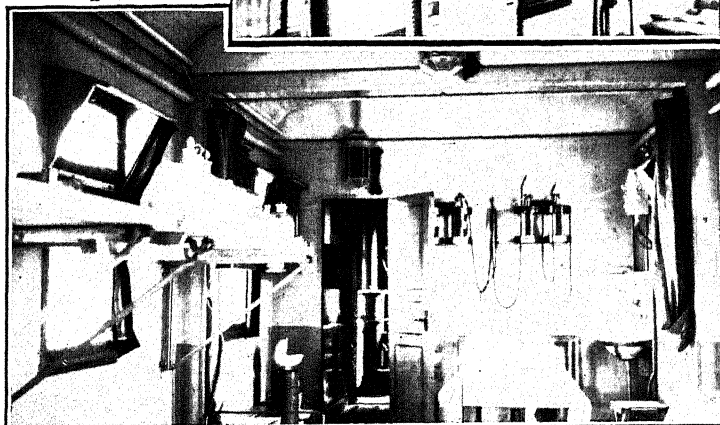


Photo: Urban, Limited.

RUSSIA'S CARE FOR HER WOUNDED: INTERIOR VIEWS OF RAILWAY HOSPITAL CAR CONNECTING THE FIGHTING FRONT WITH THE BASE HOSPITALS.

1, General Ward.

2, Operating Room.

Russians in their eventual retreat, the dissipation and demoralisation of the Russian officers at this period was very marked, and scenes were observable at the Pagoda Gardens which boded ill for the success of the Russian arms in the coming struggle. "From the officers'

tion from right to left being as follows:—With General Kuroki the Guards Division, 2nd Division, and 12th Division; with General Nozu the 10th Division and 5th Division; and with General Oku the 4th Division, 3rd Division, and the 6th Division. One

difference to the gravity of the surroundings must have been reached.

We have now to consider the forces at the disposal of the Japanese commanders. According to the *Times* correspondent with General Oku's Army the Japanese strength remained at eight divisions, the distribu-

brigade of the latter was holding Ying-kau until it was relieved by the reserve troops from Japan. As regards the armies of Generals Oku and Nozu, the above estimate is doubtless exact, and very possibly the detail of divisions allotted to General Kuroki is nominally correct also. But there is reason to believe that the last-named commander had under his control many more than the 60,000 men which could be represented by three Japanese divisions at full strength. He is known to have been strongly reinforced, and it will not probably be found an over-estimate if we place the entire strength handled by General Kuroki at not far short of 80,000 or 90,000 men. Assuming General Oku's and General Nozu's forces to be at the fullest strength, with some reinforcements, the total Japanese Army under command of Field Marshal Oyama cannot have amounted to much less than 200,000 men, and may well have exceeded that figure. Opposed to these, the Russians appear to have had about 160,000 to 180,000 men. The Russian guns are calculated by the Japanese to have numbered 572. The most likely estimates place the number of Japanese at about 600. But gross totals of this sort are generally misleading. In the first place, such numerical superiority as is assigned to the Japanese Army should here have been more than compensated by the strength of the Russian positions. Secondly, in these large battles, occupying an enormous tract of territory, thousands of troops are often not engaged at all during whole days of the fighting, and, although a certain moral value may be, and often is, attached to the possession of considerable numbers of unwearied troops in reserve, it is not mere figures alone but the

actual concentration of fighting bodies that usually wins a battle.

We need not, in any case, for the present lay great stress upon the statistics of these two armies beyond saying, that all things being considered, the original odds seem to have been very fairly balanced, and that the better side won because it was the better side, and not because it was so many tens of thousands of men to the good. Indeed, as will be seen, it was largely by reason of sheer inability to bring enough troops into action in the region of the Tai-tse-ho that the winners failed to secure the full fruits of their extraordinary exertions. This is a hardly fair anticipation, but may be defended on the ground of anxiety to enhance the interest of the fight by showing that from start to finish mere numbers were never thrown unduly into the Japanese side of the scale.

For some days before August 23rd there had been a marked cessation in the operations, partly owing to the weather, and there had also been an apparent modification in the Japanese plans. In particular, the extreme right of General Kuroki's Army seems to have fallen away from Tai-tse-ho and to have been withdrawn a good deal further south. Perhaps this was due to the considerable strength of the Russian detachments on the right bank of the river, which are said to have repeatedly foiled the attempts made by General Kuroki's right column to cross the river. On the other hand, this column may have hitherto been acting merely as a corps of observation, and its work may have been completed the first fortnight or so of August. At any rate, we know that, although the Japanese have not yet crossed the Tai-tse-ho in force, their patrols have been encountered on the right bank working in

the direction of Mukden. It is likely, then, that Kuroki's right column was not withdrawn before it had acquired some useful information as to the Russian movements on the line of communications, which Japan will soon make a strenuous endeavour to cut.

For the time has now come for the development of the main Japanese strategic plan, which is to strike the Russian communications north of Liao-yang concurrently with an attack on Liao-yang itself from the south-east and south. By this means the Japanese hope to accomplish their ambitious project of closing in on the main field army of Russia, and either annihilating it or forcing it to surrender.

At the outset the obstacles are, first, the difficulty of crossing the Tai-tse-ho; and secondly, the strong and admirably chosen Russian advanced positions, more especially that to the east of An-ping.

On August 23rd General Kuroki, whose Army is still divided into three columns, makes the first move against the Kao-feng-shu and Tang-ho positions. The left column moves out by the Yang-tzu-ling, and driving in the enemy's outposts, takes up a position from Erh-tao-ho to Pe-ling-tzu, a few miles to the westward. Here it waits until dawn on the 26th, by which time some striking developments have been brought about by the right and centre columns operating with the precision and perfect co-ordination which have marked the work of the First Army throughout.

The right column appears to have moved out on the 24th, and to have rested until the very early morning of the 26th in the immediate neighbourhood of Hun-sha-ling.

The centre column, with which are most of the correspondents, leaves Tien-

shu-tien on August 25th, and bivouacs among the cornfields in some ravines four miles to the north-west.

The three columns of the First Army are now in position to attack the Tang-ho and Kao-feng-shu positions, which have a front ten miles long, and beyond which, at a distance of five miles, runs the Tang-ho.

At 3 a.m. on the 26th the centre column delivers a great infantry attack upon the Russian defences at Kung-chang-ling. The hills are steep, but the active Japanese swarm up them, and for a time carry all before them. The Russian main position is captured, but the defenders are strongly reinforced, and in a second and third position offer stout resistance. There is plenty of hand-to-hand sword and bayonet fighting, and up to noon it looks as if the Japanese might be compelled to abandon what they have won. For the Russian artillery now posted at An-ping keeps up a heavy fire, to which the Japanese, having no positions for their guns, cannot reply. For a time, according to General Kuroki's report, the column is in jeopardy, but it succeeds in holding its ground and, eventually, in driving the enemy back into the valley of the Tang-ho.

A very graphic description of the performances of the central column is given by Mr. McKenzie, the war correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, from whose cabled despatch the following is an extract:—

"The Japanese infantry advanced in an arc-shaped formation towards the Russians. Massing at every convenient point of shelter, they soon reached the foot of the mountain, where the angle of the slope afforded protection.

"From a hill opposite I saw a steady, persistent move forward, now by twos and threes, now in long lines, as the

Japanese crept from point to point. Then a heavy fusillade began.

"The Japanese soldiers tore off their coats in order to move more freely, thus presenting splendid white marks to the enemy.

"The Japanese guns apparently found it difficult at first to get the exact range. Soon, however, the spurting smoke and flame showed where the respective batteries of the two combatants were work-

ping common shell and shapnel right into the midst of the Russian trenches, they caused the Russian fire momentarily to waver. Then it was renewed more vigorously than ever; but it was the beginning of the end.

"Some Japanese, after creeping around and wriggling through the corn, burst unexpectedly on the trenches. There was a bloody fight.

"Then, as though by magic, white

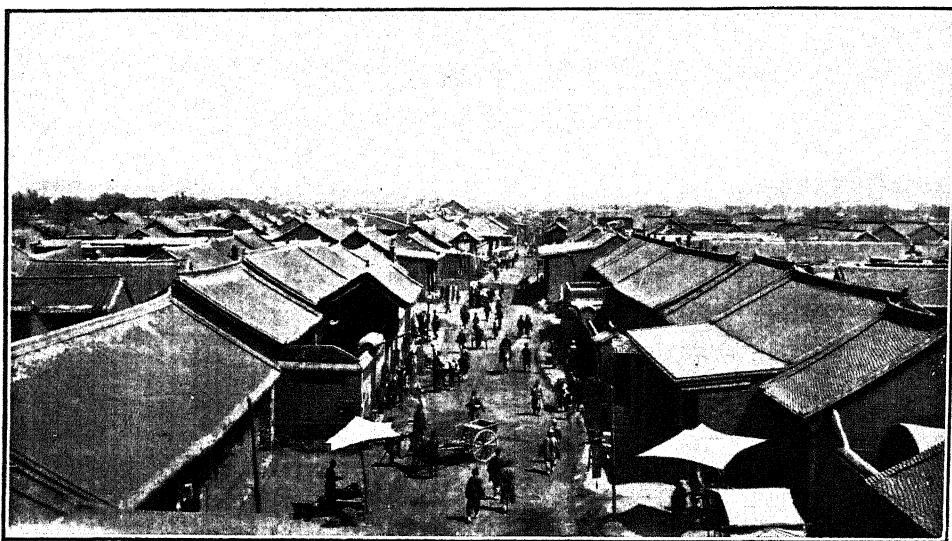


Photo: Urban, Limited.

LIAO-YANG: A BUSY THOROUGHFARE.

ing ruin. There was a ceaseless crackle from the front.

"A blue haze above the rifle-pits revealed the presence of the infantry. The day grew warmer. The white-clad soldiers, sharply silhouetted against the flowers and dark autumn-green tints of the landscape, became more numerous and conspicuous.

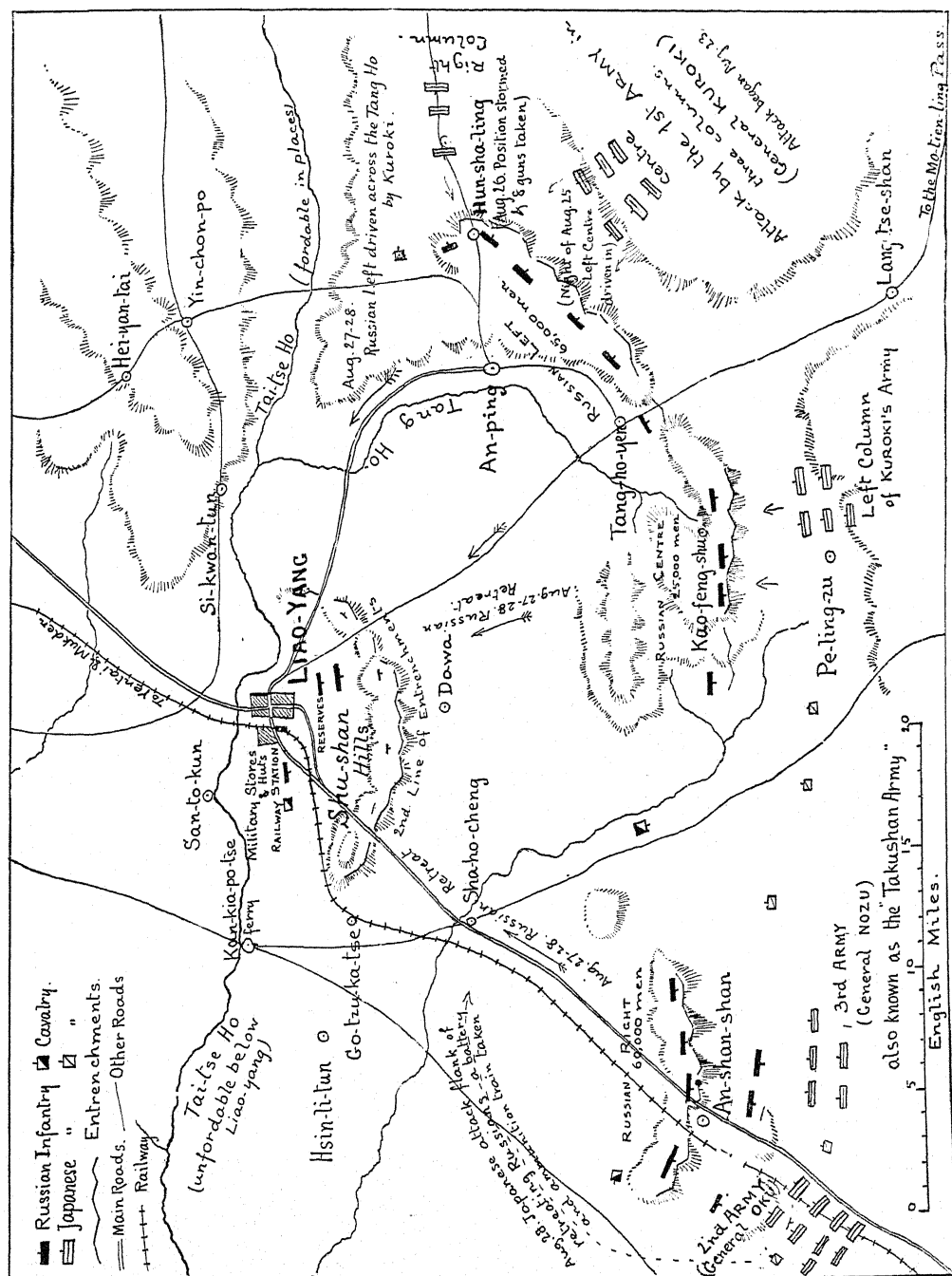
"Then two Japanese mountain guns, greatly daring, advanced on the right below the Russian front, concealing themselves in the corn. Rapidly drop-

ping common shell and shapnel right into the midst of the Russian trenches, they caused the Russian fire momentarily to waver. Then it was renewed more vigorously than ever; but it was the beginning of the end.

"On the summit stood a man waving the flag of the Rising Sun aloft. Standard-bearers could be seen tearing up the slope eager that their companies should have the honour of reaching the top of the mountain first.

"The Japanese infantry now opened fire upon the Russians descending the opposite slopes, while the Russian artillery turned savagely upon the heights held shortly before by their own men.





BATTLES AROUND LIAO-YANG: FIRST PERIOD, AUGUST 23-28.

*The fight for the outer positions, An-shan-shan to the Tang-ho Heights: Kuroki drives in the Russian left, which retreats to its second line of defence.*

"Almost to a man the Russians died at their posts or got clear away, only three prisoners being brought in by the centre column.

"As the result of the day's fighting, the Japanese losses were very heavy. One company is reported to have had over one-half its total strength killed or wounded. Sixteen officers in one regiment were killed or wounded. The total casualties of the centre were probably 600.

"The Russian artillery covered the retreat. Russian soldiers, plunging down into the valley, quickly took up other positions as the shells fell behind them."

Meanwhile, the right column, also starting into action before dawn on the 26th, has attacked Hun-sha-ling and the heights a few miles to the south. The latter are successfully escalated, but, although the fight lasts till sunset on the 26th, it is found impossible to capture Hun-sha-ling.

The left column at dawn on the 26th attacks Tai-shu-kou, its artillery engaging the enemy's guns, which are posted in a position defended by semi-permanent works extending north to Ta-tien-tzu and north-west to Kao-feng-shu. The duel, writes General Kuroki, was most vehement, and lasted two hours. The *Times* correspondent with the central column adds that, in spite of the distance and the intervening mountains, the agitation of the air was so great, that he and those with him were affected as if by the vibrations of a magnetic current.

The Japanese succeeded in occasionally silencing the enemy's guns, but could not gain any marked superiority. Russian reinforcements were brought up, and pressed heavily on the left column.

During the afternoon a tremendous thunderstorm broke over the hills, which

were afterwards so enveloped in mist as to render a complete suspension of hostilities necessary.

"To sum up these operations," says General Kuroki with characteristic terseness, "we pierced the enemy's centre, but our wings were unable to carry his positions before nightfall on the 26th."

It is a pity that no correspondent seems to have been allowed with the right column, and that those with the centre column were not permitted to see the first stage of the attack on Kung-chang-ling. For General Kuroki states that the night attacks on the latter and Hun-sha-ling produced the heaviest fighting of this section of the operations. "The moonlight enabled the enemy to detect our advance, and exposed us to a heavy fire. The enemy was also able to roll down rocks from the summit of the hills, whereby many were killed and wounded. Nevertheless, our men never flinched. They scaled the steep hill and charged into the enemy's lines, suffering heavily."

During the night of the 26th the Russians delivered several counter-attacks from Hun-sha-ling and Tai-shu-kou. These the Japanese right and left columns repulsed, the former pushing its success, occupying Hun-sha-ling, and capturing eight of the guns from which it had suffered so severely during the previous day.

By the morning of August 27th the hills fringing the right bank of the Tang-ho were practically untenable for the Russians, who had been out-flanked where they had not been expelled, but still clung tenaciously to the lower slopes commanding the river. The morning was very foggy, and very little movement was possible. The Russians, however, commenced their retirement, and the Japanese under cover of the fog managed to

establish a field battery on a position commanding the line of retreat to An-ping. At this point it is satisfactory to be able to quote a very vivid piece of descriptive writing by the *Times* correspondent:—

“As the afternoon wore on, the mist rose occasionally, and the battery at long range swept the road on which parties of the enemy were seen retiring. At 5 o'clock the wind caught the curtain which was hiding the landscape, and by a sudden movement tossed it aside, displaying to my gaze a scene worthy of the great wars of the last century. Between two deep rifts in the hills the front of the broad valley containing the Tang-ho could be seen. On the far side stood glistening thousands of white tents, and the great baggage train stretched westward into the hills. Tents were falling fast, and being piled on waggons by the feverish efforts of a host of ant-like figures. Fronting the narrow bridge was a black mass of troops and baggage, and conveying it from different valleys in front of us were long transport trains, besides columns of artillery, cavalry, and infantry. The Russian forces were in full retreat.

“Within sight were three divisions of troops with an enormous following of transport. With the rising of the mist our guns opened a heavy and regular fire upon the upper part of the valley before the artillery. Our division, some miles to the right, now came into action, and we could hear the roar of their guns and see the smoke of the bursting shrapnel. In the valley beyond An-ping the loud rattle of musketry also came to us, showing on the left our infantry hot on the heels of the retiring enemy. Presently, far beyond the ridge, two Russian batteries came into action. The enemy's

guns were directed against the attacking infantry which threatened the bridge and the *mêlée* of troops and baggage waiting to cross. Mingling with the white clouds raised by our shrapnel, we could see the darker smoke of the enemy's shrapnel, but the effect of the fire was veiled by the intervening hills. The block at the bridge was somewhat relieved near night-fall by cavalry fording the river. The stream was rapid and deep, the horses were almost covered by the rushing water, and many were unable to cross. Some were swept off their feet by the current and hauled out of danger by those more strongly mounted. As we watched the shadows were lengthening, and presently the sun sank beyond the horizon, leaving great masses of crimson clouds to veil the Russian retirement. The retreat was conducted in perfect order and evidently planned beforehand. The enemy now retired to the left bank of the Tang-ho, to seize which was the immediate object of General Kuroki's movements.”

By the morning of August 28th the greater portion of General Kuroki's Army was occupying the right bank of the Tang-ho. Before them lay the river, 200 yards wide and running rapidly. On the opposite side rose precipitous hills on which in every direction the lines of the enemy's trenches could be traced. The Japanese were at a serious disadvantage, for here again they lacked artillery positions, and only single mountain guns could be used at the main point of attack. These began to speak at 8 o'clock, and, as the shrapnel burst among the Russian trenches, the latter were forsaken, the defenders streaming to the rear into a patch of millet, and then climbing the steep ascent beyond. Although their cream-coloured linen coats made each

man a perfect target against the green hillside, and the shrapnel burst with great precision at a range of 3,000 yards, the retiring Russians were observed to suffer strangely little loss. But better results were obtained a little later by the Japanese, when three of their field batteries which had been posted on their right, now resting on An-ping, came into action against the trenches on the Russian left. An attempt was made to reinforce the latter, two companies marching down boldly from the higher slopes in the rear for this purpose. But at the bursting of the first shell from the guns at An-ping, these companies turned tail and fled up a ridge on the left, followed almost immediately by the occupants of the trenches, among whom the hail of shrapnel this time wrought considerable havoc.

The Russian trenches were now systematically searched for half an hour in preparation for the passage of the Tang-ho. For a description of this operation we are again indebted to the *Times* correspondent, who was extremely well-placed for watching it, being posted on a peak a mile distant from the river and commanding it for many miles:—

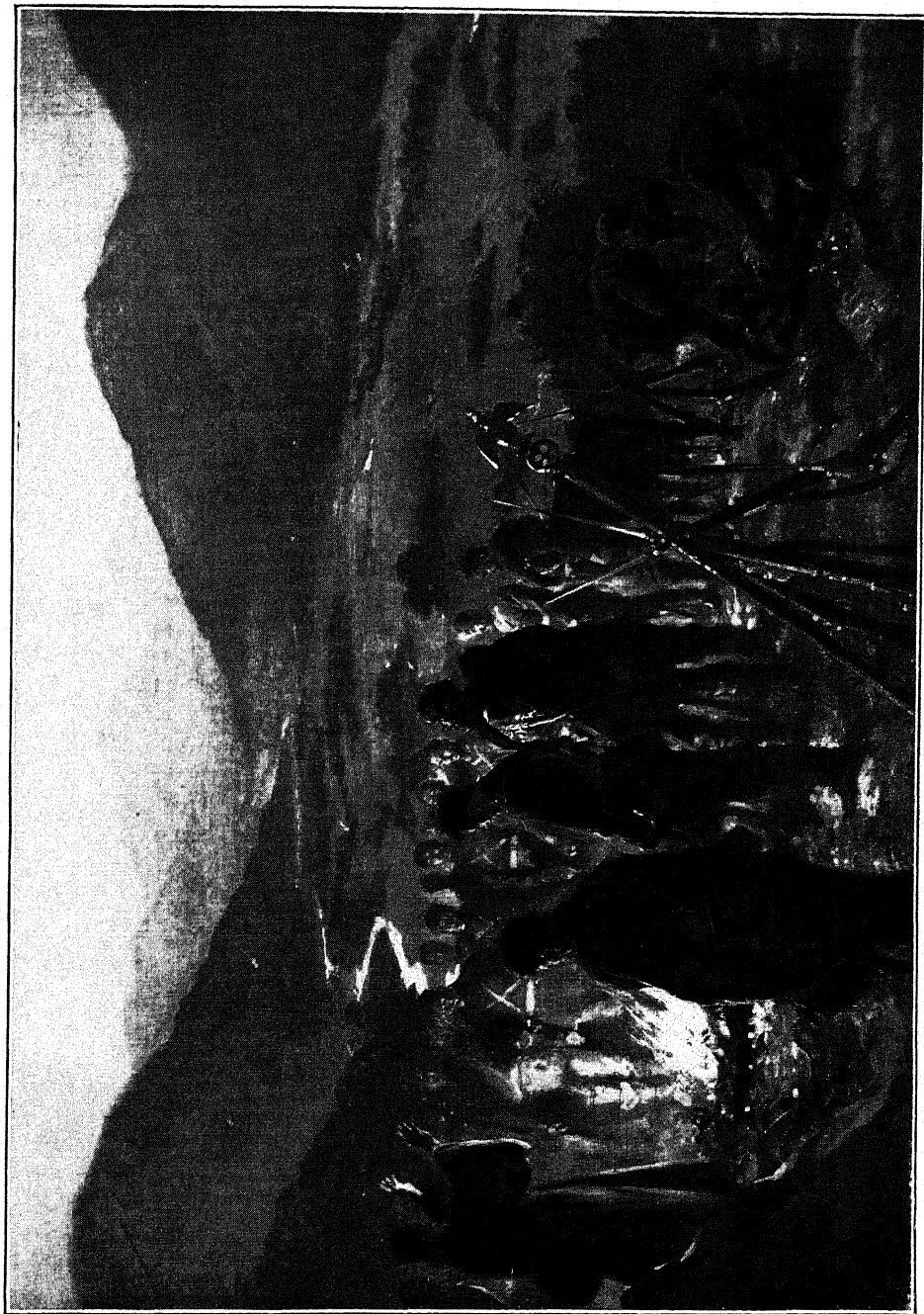
“On either hand our men in four columns lay close to the river under cover of the millet. At 1 o'clock the attacking forces set in motion four columns which crossed the river bed, entering the water in a storm of long-range rifle fire. The column immediately beneath was very clearly visible. The men, in extended order, dashed into the water and were soon immersed to the waist and afterwards to the shoulders. Holding their rifles above their heads, some were swept off their feet by the rapid current, and a few were wounded. Fortunately for the Japanese, the Russian guns did not com-

mand the crossing. In ten minutes three columns were across; the fourth, attempting to cross at an unfordable point, had to return to seek a better place. During their half-hour of exposure I could not see any casualties, although the water and sand around them were churned by the rain of bullets.

“On landing, the various columns, without delay, advanced in long strings into the ravines leading to the enemy's main line, a mile beyond the river.”

The above remarks apply chiefly to the 2nd Division, which the *Times* correspondent seems to have accompanied, and the Guards Division on the right. The 12th Division on the left must meanwhile have been engaged in rolling up the Russian right, and assisting its retreat along the main road—the Peking road, as it is called, to Liao-yang. The Japanese left column seems to have met with a much more stubborn resistance than that encountered by the centre and right columns, as to which the *Times* correspondent speaks very disparagingly. “I find it impossible,” he says, “to refrain from remarking on the pusillanimous flight of the enemy from their advanced trenches. I heard a foreign attaché say when he saw the Russians running that it made him ashamed for white men. Possibly the Russians did exactly as they intended, but their selection of the positions of some of their trenches suggested that these were meant to be held, and it is difficult to understand why they constructed earthworks for 2,000 or 3,000 yards offering an exposed line of retreat, unless they deemed it necessary seriously to retard the passage of the river by the infantry.”

It is only fair to balance this by an allusion to General Kuropatkin's despatches, in which the Commander-in-



THE EVENING OF BATTLE: PRAYER ROUND A RUSSIAN CAMP FIRE IN MANCHURIA.

Chief praises warmly the "devotion of all the troops on the east front," which alone enabled the withdrawal from the advanced positions to be carried out in good order. "Only after incredible difficulties was it found possible to drag all the guns without exception and all the baggage through the passes. Some of the guns were carried through the mountains by the infantry. Difficult as the retreat through the passes under pressure from the enemy had been, the march across the open country was still more arduous. The left and centre columns, however, succeeded in getting all their artillery and baggage to Liao-yang." In passing one is a little surprised at the emphatic statement of General Kuropatkin as to the safe withdrawal of *all* the guns belonging to the Russian left and centre columns. It will be remembered that General Kuroki's right column was stated to have captured eight guns at Hun-sha-ling, and this statement is endorsed by General Kuroki himself in his official report. In such a case "where doctors disagree" it is, indeed, difficult to decide; but the mere discrepancy is interesting, as indicating the occasional difficulties that beset the compilation of a story like this.

While for the moment we are dealing with the Russian side, it should be mentioned that some uncertainty exists as to the identity of the Russian commanders on the left and centre. A certain amount of shuffling appears to have taken place on the left, but it is mentioned by Reuter's correspondent that the late General Keller has been succeeded in command of the troops immediately opposed to General Kuroki by Lieutenant-General Ivanoff, an officer fifty-three years of age, who won considerable distinction in the Russo-Turkish War, and has since, from 1890

to 1899, commanded the garrison artillery at Kronstadt.

At nightfall on August 28th we have all General Kuroki's three columns on the left bank of the Tang-ho, and the right column cannot be more than a very few miles from the junction of that stream with the Tai-tse-ho. The Russian left and centre have fallen back on the Liao-yang position, and so we may reckon General Kuroki's object to have been, if laboriously, at any rate successfully, accomplished. It now remains to ascertain whether the forces of Generals Oku and Nozu have been equally fortunate during this First Phase of the great Liao-yang Battle.

We left General Oku at the close of Chapter LIV. still at Hai-cheng, in close communication with General Nozu. To his front lay a strong screen of Russian troops, and beyond them one of the Russian main advanced positions at An-shan-shan. General Oku's advance appears to have commenced on August 25th, his force marching in several columns along the west of the Hai-cheng-Liao-yang road, while General Nozu's corps marched to the east of it. It will be remembered that the detail of divisions from right to left is said to have been as follows:—10th and 5th Divisions with Nozu; 4th, 3rd, and 6th Divisions with General Oku.

Of General Nozu's advance there is very scanty information available. He appears to have followed the first valley, furnishing a road parallel to the railway, and may later have branched off more to the east, in order to drive in the Russians holding the chain of minor advanced positions between An-shan-shan and Kao-feng-shu. We know that on the 28th General Nozu had worked up sufficiently far north to be able to detach the 10th.

Division to form a junction with General Kuroki. On the previous day he had apparently assisted General Oku by overtaking the enemy, who were then in full retreat upon Liao-yang, and throwing them into much confusion by a well-directed artillery fire. These performances support the view advanced in a previous chapter, that the junction of General Nozu's force has hitherto been not so much to attempt individual operations of importance as to render timely help to the armies on his right and left as occasion might require.

General Oku's force to the west of the railway evidently met with a good deal of opposition, and on the 26th there was a sharp engagement lasting an hour, after which the Russians retired on the An-shan-shan position.

An interesting glimpse of the Russian position at An-shan-shan is given by the Liao-yang correspondent of the *Paris Journal*, M. Ludovic Naudeau, who reached this point on August 26th. "The configuration of the country," he says, "permitted me to obtain a wide view. Not only could I observe the shooting of the Russian batteries, but I could also follow the explosion of their shrapnel in the wooded country held by the Japanese. In the afternoon everything had been prepared for a great battle. A long rocky crest of steep heights barring the plains was held by a line of sharpshooters. Below them, half-way down the slope, were the infantry in five pentagonal redoubts in a position to deliver a cross-fire. The rain fell heavily, yet the troops stoically passed the night in these favourable positions, where the Japanese ought to have suffered enormous losses on the morrow."

But the morrow's great battle of An-shan-shan was not to be. It will be re-

membered that during the night of August 26th General Kuroki's right column had completed to all intents and purposes the capture of the Tang-ho position by an assault upon Hun-sha-ling. The loss of this position and the attendant heavy casualties seem now to have rendered Kuropatkin disinclined to risk another reverse on his right. Accordingly, the order was sent to the force at An-shan-shan to retire upon the Shu-shan Hills, an order which, we are told, created profound disappointment. This is hardly surprising in view of the long and weary series of rear-guard actions which this force had fought since its repulse at Telissu, and the immense labour which must have been expended on the fortifications at An-shan-shan. Probably the Russian hopes had seldom run higher than on this occasion, more especially as, with the exception of the engagement on the 26th, there had been no fighting of any consequence for weeks, and the Russian troops were far fresher than before most of the preceding actions.

"On the 27th, at noon," writes M. Naudeau, "the retreat was accomplished, and from a high vantage ground I witnessed a stirring sight. Towards the north the Russian infantry, abandoning its positions, retired in good order in columns, with bands playing. To the south the Japanese scouts came out into the open, followed by dense masses, whose approach I could distinctly follow. For half an hour I watched the two hostile armies marching simultaneously northward. Columns of smoke went up. The Russians were burning the An-shan-shan station and the railway bridge south of the station."

The subsequent course of the Russian retreat was hardly so orderly as it appeared at noon to the well-posted cor-



respondent of the *Journal*. We have already seen how the retiring Russians suffered to the east of the railway at the hands of General Nozu's force. Nor was General Oku's Army, although somewhat fatigued, behindhand in taking advantage of the unexpected evacuation of An-shan-shan. Having hastily occupied the latter a force was pushed forward, which succeeded in overtaking a considerable body of the Russians and punishing it severely.

This incident, to which General Kuropatkin makes feeling allusion in one of his despatches, must have been a striking one. The Russian retirement was now being conducted under terribly trying conditions. The rain was falling heavily, and the great Liao plain to the west of the railway must have been in a frightful state. Laboriously the guns and baggage waggons were being dragged over this tract of mud, when one whole battery became bogged in some marshy ground, and the guns began to sink. The enemy were pressing on the rear and flanks, and the situation was one calling for the best sort of energy and fighting courage. It would appear that the Russians rose well to the occasion. While the rear-guard, under Major-General Rutkovsky, faced about and did its best to keep the enemy at bay, tremendous exertions were made to save the guns. As many as twenty-four horses were hitched on to each piece, while companies of infantry with long ropes assisted in the work. The horses and men, however, sank so deep in the soft ground that many of the latter could not free themselves, and had to be hauled out by their comrades. Major-General Rutkovsky remained in his position so long in order to cover the work of extricating the guns, that his force sustained heavy

losses. The gallant General himself and Colonel Raaben, commanding the 4th Regiment of Eastern Siberian Sharpshooters, were killed.

It is quite painful to add, that in spite of these heroic efforts and serious sacrifices, the guns, which had sunk as far as the tops of the wheels, had to be abandoned, and in due course fell into the hands of the Japanese.

On August 28th the Armies of General Oku have approached to within about a dozen miles to the south and south-west of Liao-yang.

It now remains to review briefly the operations, more especially of the past four days, and to make a rough estimate of the losses and gains on both sides. As regards casualties there seems little to choose. The Russians confess to having had "about 1,500" killed and wounded on the right and centre, and General Kuroki returns his casualties on the 26th and 27th at 2,000. On the other hand, the Russians must have suffered very much more severely than the Japanese in the fighting, such as it was, round An-shan-shan. Perhaps we shall not be very far from the mark if we put the losses on each side at a little over 2,000, by no means a heavy list considering the very large numbers engaged and the desperate character of some of the fighting.

Turning to the results achieved, we find the Russians withdrawn from all their advanced positions into the inner line of Liao-yang defences, which are now being definitely menaced by the combined Japanese forces. Quite apart from the cut-and-run performances of the Russian infantry on the left bank of the Tang-ho, it can hardly be argued that the attitude of the Russian Army during the First Phase of the Battle of Liao-yang has

been a dignified one. Even if we assume that an early retirement on the inner line of defences was intended, it seems incredible that such a force as Kuropatkin had disposed on the line An-shan-shan—

deadly effect, but this they were unable to do in the attack on the Tang-ho position, and had no occasion to do in the case of An-shan-shan. The conviction is forced upon us that the troops



RUGGED MANCHURIA: DIFFICULTIES OF JAPANESE ARTILLERY TRANSPORT.

Kao-feng-shu—An-ping should have been unable to inflict a greater loss upon the enemy from behind such elaborate and admirably planned defences. The case would have been different had the Japanese been able to use their artillery with

defending the Tang-ho were indeed demoralised by the badness of their officers, to whom the proximity of Liao-yang with its various unwholesome attractions has, as we have already seen, proved a constant snare. Indeed, Reuter's corres-

pendent at Liao-yang says, explicitly, that after the evacuation of the Tang-ho position numbers of the officers who had been engaged hurried back to Liao-yang and there plunged into unlovely dissipation.

The force at An-shan-shan might have made a far better show had it had the chance, being composed largely of officers and men who had fought dogged rear-guard actions up the north of the Liaotung Peninsula, and were probably in first-rate trim as regards *morale*. Indeed, the episode of the stand made in the hope of saving the bogged guns indicates a very different spirit from that which was exhibited on the Russian right and centre.

The Japanese may claim to have carried out the first part of their programme with conspicuous success, and with remarkably small loss. They have captured all the advanced positions of the enemy and sixteen guns, with a loss only half as great as that endured in the attack upon Nanshan. This is a truly remarkable performance, and all the more so since the result has been achieved by steady, straightforward fighting. On the other hand, the First Army has undoubtedly been a good deal strained in the process, and at the close of the 28th is not sufficiently concentrated to be able to take up its allotted task—that of moving north, and to cut, if possible, the Russian

communications—with the requisite speed and vigour.

It has been suggested that it would have served the Japanese purpose better had General Nozu's Army co-operated with General Kuroki instead of with General Oku, thus rendering the attack on the Tang-ho position less wearing. But, when we come to the bed-rock of fact, it is difficult to see how this would have been possible without serious risk. The Japanese had no right to suppose that the An-shan-shan position would be evacuated, as it was, almost without a shot being fired. Even assuming the prompt capture of the Tang-ho position, it was hardly to be foreseen that Kuropatkin would not allow An-shan-shan to be defended for a single day, in the course of which a blow might have been dealt against the unaided Army of General Oku from which it might not readily have recovered. Surely the Japanese are not to be blamed for looking ahead in this direction, more especially as the actual numbers at Kuroki's disposal appeared amply sufficient for the first part of the task allotted to him.

Beyond these incidental reflections we need not at present go. It is sufficient to say that the First Phase of the Battle of Liao-yang is now ended, and that tomorrow (August 29th) the struggle will be resumed with equal determination and far more sanguinary results.

## CHAPTER LVI.

BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG CONTINUED—THE SECOND PHASE—LIAO-YANG ITSELF—RUSSIAN DEFENCES—OKU'S AND NOZU'S ADVANCE—TERRIFIC ASSAULTS—KUROKI'S FLANKING MOVEMENT—PASSAGE OF THE TAI-TSE.

**H**EAVY with lurid significance opens, on the morning of August 29th, the Second Phase of the battle of Liao-yang. Now at last we are getting at the heart of a situation gradually produced by months of alternating feverish activity and patient waiting. It is one of those situations, too, of which the outcome is complicated by a dozen considerations that cannot be brought together in any sort of harmony. At the moment not Oyama, not Kuropatkin, not the most sagacious critic at a distance can foretell with certainty the final issue. We ourselves may be able to invest this Phase with greater interest if we assume a similar incertitude. But we may trench on our store of post-eventual wisdom by taking it for granted that the three days' period with which we are about to deal is an intermediate period, in which, although there is fighting of the most impressive sort and on a truly massive scale, there is hardly such a definite result secured as in the case of the Phase dealt with in the preceding chapter. On the other hand, many present doubts will in this interval have been removed, and by the evening of the 31st a point will have been reached from which the really interested observer the end should be in sight.

In the account given of the First Phase of the Liao-yang fighting precedence was accorded to the columns under

General Kuroki. In dealing with the Second Phase it is expedient to commence with the operations of Generals Oku and Nozu, the latter of whom still plays a somewhat secondary rôle. But before we proceed to examine the movements of the attacking Japanese we may profitably devote attention to the new Russian position which, as already explained, embraces the inner defences of Liao-yang, and in which Liao-yang itself is consequently a centre of interest, though not of engrossing tactical importance.

Liao-yang has been described as the Russian military capital of Southern Manchuria. A large town of about 60,000 inhabitants, its position at the junction of the two main roads to Korea and Port Arthur respectively gives it very considerable commercial significance. But its value to Russia was chiefly bound up in the railway, and it was round the railway station that the Russian settlement had grown up, with an immense agglomeration of magazines, storehouses, hospitals, and other establishments connected with the maintenance of the army in the field. From time to time in the course of this narrative allusion has been made to the conditions of life at Liao-yang and to its more prominent features as a military centre. It now remains to see what steps Kuropatkin has taken to justify his long sojourn at a spot from which many critics



Photo: Uroan, Limited.

LIAO-YANG SUBURBS, LOOKING EAST.

think he should have retired months ago, and in which it is possible that he is even now sojourning against his better judgment.

Although the place is far from being impregnable, there is no question that Russian engineering skill has transformed Liao-yang into a field fortress of very real strength. From the first, considerable natural advantages were present. South-west of the town, at a distance of about six miles, stands a rocky eminence some 900 feet high, known as Mount Shu-shan, and from this to the south and south-east of the town runs in crescent shape a chain of hills terminating near the left bank of the Tai-tse-ho, not far from its junction with the Tang. This first line has been furnished with elaborate fortifications commenced before the war broke out, and since greatly extended and perfected. Many large guns said to have been removed from Russian fortresses in Europe have been emplaced here, and the point to the south has been rendered difficult of approach by wire entanglements and other obstacles. During the actual defence of Liao-yang Mount Shu-shan will be used as an observatory from which all the artillery fire

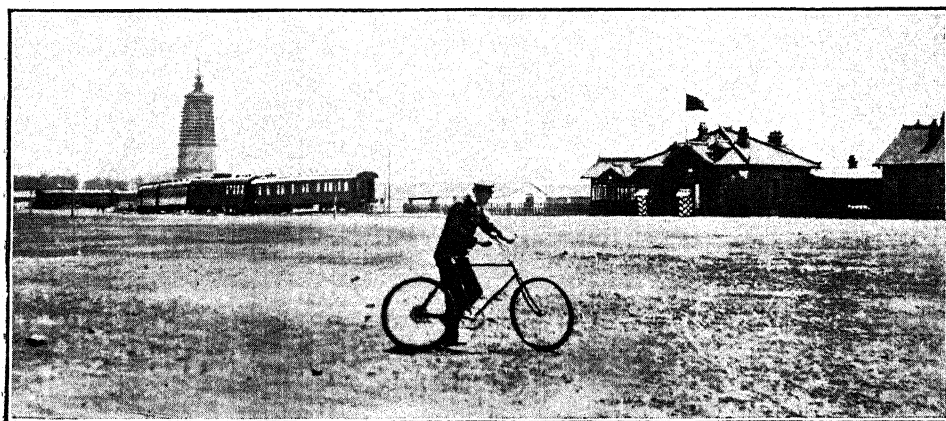
to the south can be directed by telephone. The main position to the south of Liao-yang, and the one against which the chief attack will be delivered, runs eastwards from Mount Shu-shan for about five miles, and consists of several distinct hills joined by low saddles. In front of this—it is the *Times* correspondent with the Japanese Left Army who furnishes this information—is a gently sloping plain many hundred acres in extent, deep in crops, and studded with half a dozen Chinese hamlets. In front of Mount Shu-shan, again, is a Chinese village the walls of which are loopholed.

To the left of the Russian main position the country was broken and unentrenched, the Russians trusting to a second position on a supporting range 1,000 yards to the north for protection in this quarter. The defence of Liao-yang against an attack from the east need not now be taken into account. To the right of Mount Shu-shan an extension of the main position carried the line of defence westwards to Hsin-li-tun. Lastly, it may be noted that, in anticipation of a fight to a finish, a "line of clever entrenchments actually in the flats of the suburbs" had been prepared by the Russian engineers.

On August 29th the preliminaries of the Second Phase of the battle of Liao-yang were accomplished without much fighting. General Oku's headquarters were halted, while his advanced guard felt the Russian front. Meanwhile, General Nozu's 5th Division—it will be remembered that he had detached the 10th Division on the previous day to co-operate with General Kuroki's army—came into contact with the Russians who were holding the unentrenched broken ground on the left of the enemy's main position, and made some impression on them. But no attempt was made to deliver an organised attack, chiefly, no doubt, owing to the delayed concentration of the First Army, to which allusion was made at the close of the last chapter. The gradual closing up of General Oku's and General Nozu's forces to within striking distance of the Shu-shan hills may well have been an impressive, although perhaps not a spectacular, performance. In the case of the Second Army the process represents the climax in a long and toilsome series of fights and marches, which for many of those concerned has lasted since the landing which preceded

the battle of Nan-shan. To all both of Oku's and Nozu's officers and men the prospect of getting at the vitals of the Russian strategical scheme must have been inexpressibly welcome. One can imagine the enthusiasm produced by the sight of the Shu-shan hills, only half a dozen miles beyond which Liao-yang itself was known to lie. When, too, at the close of the 29th, the Japanese to the south of this formidable position bivouacked in the full knowledge that on the morrow would commence some of the fiercest fighting of the campaign, the universal feeling must have been one of joyful resolution to spare no effort, shrink from no sacrifice, to make the day and those following it stand out in history to the eternal credit of Japan.

At 5 o'clock in the morning of August 30th, General Oku's army marched out in three columns from its lines at Sha-ho-cheng, about ten miles to the south-west of Liao-yang. The advance was made under cover of the crops, and it was not until an hour and a half later that two Russian batteries opened fire on the advancing, snake-like columns from a saddle south of Mount Shu-shan. Simul-



*Photo: Urban, Limited.*

GENERAL KUROPATKIN'S HEADQUARTERS AND SPECIAL TRAIN AT LIAO-YANG.

taneously, heavy firing was heard from the direction of General Nozu's army on the right. It would appear that at this stage the Japanese infantry was adventured somewhat too freely, and that it was severely punished by the accurate shrapnel fire of the Russians. Nevertheless, the three columns of Oku's army pushed on, preserving close touch with Nozu's 5th Division, until by mid-day a position was reached, the left of which extended westward so as to overlap Hsin-li-tun.

The artillery on both sides now came hotly into action, and, in fact, to the south of the Shu-shan hills the firing seems to have lasted practically all day. The Japanese suffered from some disadvantage, as in the damp atmosphere the smoke of their guns raised a haze which was wafted higher than the tall millet stalks concealing them. Of such good marks the Russian artillery, itself admirably masked, would not fail to take advantage.

Meanwhile the infantry columns worked forwards more cautiously, the divisional commanders receiving orders to attack at dusk. For this attack preparation was made by a tremendous artillery fire from 100 Japanese field-guns and 60 howitzers. The Russians replied from about 50 guns, or half the number said to be mounted on the Shu-shan hills. The Special Correspondent of the *Paris Temps* was on Mount Shu-shan while this cannonade was proceeding, and says that the peak was raked with shrapnel. General Stackelberg, by whose side the correspondent was standing, was nearly killed by a shell which burst only a few yards off.

In order to prepare for the coming infantry attack the Russians now brought up their reserves, and the cavalry under

General Mishtchenko was disposed with a view to dashing in upon the Japanese flanks.

The result of this first infantry attack was, says the *Times* correspondent with the Left Army, abortive. "Gallantly the little infantrymen responded to the order in their groups of twelve, which is their formation for such an attack, and pressed up towards the inferno prepared for them." The leading battalions of the 4th and 6th Divisions dashed at the approaches of Mount Shu-shan itself, "but a sheet of lead from the loopholed village at the base of the eminence and from the supporting trenches swept them back, and they were fain to dig themselves into the soft mud on the fringe of the standing corn."

"The 3rd Division, with the gallant 34th Regiment leading, made a similar attempt nearer the centre, but the result was the same harrowing slaughter."

"On the Russian left the right brigade of the 3rd Division and the 5th Division had made better progress. . . . The men of the 3rd Division had seized a small underfeature, and the 5th Division had made good the hills in front of them which the Russians had failed to entrench."

Towards evening the rain began to come down heavily, and at nightfall the Japanese forces, drenched and weary, were faced by the fact that their first attack on the inner defences of Liao-yang had been a costly failure.

In his official report, General Oku attributes this result largely to the state of the roads, which had hindered the collective action of his artillery, and thus made it impossible to weaken the enemy's fire. One can understand the disappointment of a general with 160 pieces of artillery at his disposal, and a screen of crops



nearly ten feet high behind which to work them, yet utterly unable to mass them by reason of muddy roads.

An interesting feature of the operations on August 30th was the employment by the Russians of a captive balloon for the purpose of observing the enemy's movements. It would be difficult to imagine a case in which aerial reconnaissance would be more useful than it must have been in this. Evidently the balloon scouts caused General Oku active annoyance, for he speaks of them as "frequently modifying the tactics on the various fronts." This is a rather cryptic phrase, it is true, as it may mean that either the Russian or Japanese tactics were affected. But clearly General Oku resented the presence of these inconvenient scouts, to whom most of his manœuvres in the tall millet patches must have been easily discernible.

It might be thought that after such a heavy and discouraging day's fighting the Japanese Second Army would have been allowed a brief respite in which to recuperate. But *nec mora nec requies* is the motto of the Japanese infantry in the field, and at nightfall on the 30th it was determined that the three columns, under cover of the darkness, should destroy the obstacles and renew the attack, which, if successful, should be repeated at dawn. Of this gallant attempt the best and only detailed description appears to be that given by General Oku himself in his official despatch.

"At 3 a.m. on the 31st the infantry of the first column made a resolute attack, and about dawn a regiment on the column's left captured the highlands south of Shou-shan-pao. But in consequence of a heavy fire on its front and both flanks and a counter-attack by a superior force of the enemy from the

heights to the north, the regiment was compelled to fall back to the foot of the hills after a hard fight in which it suffered many casualties. The column's right also, though bravely advancing undeterred by the great difficulties and heavy losses, found the enemy's fire so withering and the hills so steep that the men were finally obliged to lie down at the foot of the heights and were unable to rise.

"The second column, repulsing frequent counter-attacks from 1 a.m., followed up the enemy during the darkness, and, in spite of a heavy fire from machine guns, pushed on to the railway, getting within 50 to 100 metres of the enemy's position. But being overlooked from the heights and suffering heavily from the enemy's fire, it was unable to make a final charge before daybreak, when five battalions from the third column, deploying to the left of the second column, greatly stiffened the latter. At 7 a.m. three battalions, advancing from the main road, reinforced the left of the first column. However, although the first and second columns attacked in full strength, while the artillery of the whole force hotly cannonaded the forts at effective ranges, yet they did not succeed in opening a way for pressing home the attack."

General Nozu's 5th Division co-operated in this attack, and its temporary success against the Russian left is well described by the *Times* correspondent. "The position here was composed of a brush-covered hog'sback, sloping to the east, defended by a triple line of trenches with a glacis protected by a 10-ft. entanglement covering a honeycomb of pits containing spikes at the bottom. The lower feature of this hill was a salient, but the upper works were flanked by a conical hill in front which acted as a

bastion, and which was also cunningly entrenched.

"In the semi-darkness of the morning the 41st Regiment carried this underfeature after losing 75 of the 100 pioneers, who hacked their way through the entanglement with axes. The men, rushing through the gap, overpowered the sentries in the trenches before the supports, sleeping in splinter proofs behind, could reinforce them. But daybreak brought a tragedy of the kind which is so common in modern war. Shell fire, believed to be from Japanese guns, drove this gallant storming party from its hold, filling the Russian trenches with Japanese dead. Thus an hour after sunrise the position of the defence and of the attack on this front was practically the *status quo*."

From this same correspondent, whose lucid and impartial despatches have now the approval even of Russian newspaper critics, we borrow a particularly fine description of the work of the 5th Division during the morning and afternoon of the 31st.

"The weather was now fine, and the energy of this southern attack all the morning was concentrated in an artillery fire on the bushy hill that had been won and lost. At 10 o'clock we could see the 5th Division moving up against the Russian left. The slow and creeping work of this division had enabled them to approach within nearer range of the enemy, and their little hand howitzers, which weapons accompany every infantry brigade, were now brought up to the support of the firing line. They massed against rocky excrescences which gave cover from the Russian artillery fire until the preparation seemed complete, then they extended down the inner and outer slope of the ridge in company columns in

single line, shoulder to shoulder, lying down. At a quarter to 12 the advanced lines broke into groups of twelve, and began a series of rushes according to the usual method of Japanese infantry attack. After making a short rush the men lie down. They do not fire, rifle support coming from the supports in rear. In this case the firing line was thrown out along the actual crest which divided the two attacking lines.

"There is a moment of intense excitement while the summit of the Russian position is like a miniature Mount Pelée in eruption owing to the bursting of dozens of Shimoshi shells. The head of the assault is in the gap in the entanglement. The artillery is supporting the assault. Three or four ground mines explode in the midst of the leading assaulting groups. Then as the smoke clears the black-coated Russians are seen leaving the position. In a moment the Japanese are in, and the whole of the lines in support on the crest are firing down the slope into the retreating Russians.

"But one swallow does not make a summer. Although the underfeature of the bushy hill was carried, the rest of the assault failed miserably. No Japanese could live within 500 yards of the bastion hill, and though the Japanese came out of the corn until the groups were so numerous that I can liken them only to swarming bees, it was only to be swept backwards into cover again, leaving behind the heavy price of their valour. The handful of men who seized the hill were able to hold it, but could not advance an inch, and thus the afternoon wore on. All along the line no movement could be traced except the moving nearer in of some few Japanese batteries. The artillery duel, however, continued unabated.

Along the fringe of the Japanese front individual infantrymen had crept forward and dug themselves in where mounds or watercourses made it possible to escape the searching fire of the Russian rifles,

ported that a considerable body of the enemy with some guns had appeared two hours previously to the north-west of Go-tau-ka-tse, the remaining reserves of the third column were sent to meet them,



JAPANESE ARTILLERY ON THE MARCH.

while all the time the Russian shrapnel was causing hundreds of casualties in the flats."

About 5 p.m. a diversion took place on the extreme Japanese left. The commander of the third column having re-

and the Japanese cavalry, also operating in this quarter, reconnoitred in the direction of Liao-yang.

By 7 p.m. General Oku was getting desperate, and accordingly it was determined to make yet one more attack, the

third in twenty-four hours. At the hour named, accordingly, the artillery fire was concentrated on the fortifications, which appeared to be greatly shaken by the terrific cannonade. During the night, says General Kuroki in his official despatch, the infantry on all faces, after full preparation, forced the secondary obstacles, and by gallant charges the first column seized the hills west of Go-tau-ka-tse, the second column gained an eminence to the west of Mount Shu-shan, and the second column's auxiliary force occupied the hills along the highway.

At this dramatic point, which was reached shortly after midnight on August 31st, we shall leave for the present the Japanese forces to the south of Liao-yang. But before we break the thread of the narrative of General Oku's grand performance it may be well to elucidate two doubtful points. According to the *Times* correspondent's account the artillery preparation from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. was followed by an attack which was a failure. "It was a repetition of all the previous assaults except at one portion of the line. For the rest there was gruesome evidence on the following morning to show how, like hares in snares, the heroic infantry had struggled into barbed wire entanglements to die, how, blundering in the darkness, sections had thrown themselves down 30 yards from the flaring line of muzzles whose flashes marked the goal they were never to win. But the first battalion of the 34th Regiment, which for forty-eight hours had been lying in the scrub at the foot of the green glacis on the centre hill, broke through abatis and entanglements, and, in spite of a flanking fire which swept away group after group, had enough endurance to reach the first trench.

"What happened there none know;

but in the morning, when we viewed the position, Russians and Japanese were lying intermingled waist-deep in the ditch, while from parapet to entanglement, perhaps 150 yards, the thick trail of prostrate khaki told a tale that no pen can describe."

The inference seems to be that there was an unsuccessful attack which General Oku's published report leaves untouched, and which was followed by a successful advance possibly in the teeth of some, though not serious, opposition. For, as we shall see when we come to the opening of the Third Phase of the battle, the Russian defence of the Shu-shan hills has now been completely broken down.

This brings us to the second point, as to which there is some anxiety. According to Reuter's correspondent at Liao-yang, General Stackelberg with the 1st Army Corps was still facing General Oku, while General Nozu was confronted by General Ivanoff, who, with a large portion of the "Eastern Army," had been driven back from the region of the Tang-ho. On the extreme Russian right was General Mishtchenko, with a mixed cavalry, infantry, and artillery force. During the night of August 31st, if not before, Generals Stackelberg and Ivanoff withdrew their headquarters, the former to Liao-yang itself, the latter across the Tai-tse to a point sheltered by the city wall on the road to Yen-tai. General Mishtchenko was transferred to the north-east with a view to meeting General Kuroki's movement in that quarter. The veteran cavalry leader, General Greikoff, was left in charge of the advanced defence with a force consisting apparently of the whole of the Siberian Reserves Division, part of the 1st and 5th Rifle Divisions—in all, perhaps, some 25,000 men—and about 50 guns. These,

too, at 3 a.m. on September 1st, were retreating in the direction of Liao-yang.

While naturally the main interest of the desperate fighting to the south of Liao-yang on August 31st is centred in the attack, there are some thrilling details given of the scenes witnessed from the side of the defence. It is evident that

diers, and hear the commands of the officers. Here and there the opposing troops were so close that they even hurled stones at each other.

The well-known Russian war correspondent, M. Nemirovitch Dantchenko, says :—

“The battlefield was a perfect hell.



GENERAL GREIKOFF.

at times the struggle was of the closest and bitterest sort imaginable. At one point the Russian officers drew their swords and revolvers in order to prepare for hand-to-hand fighting, but a timely arrival of infantry reserves postponed the actual collision. At another the railway embankment alone separated the adversaries. The Russians could see quite distinctly the forces of the Japanese sol-

General Stackelberg, wounded but despising death, remained immovable at his post, watching the progress of the fight. In the evening he sent a message to General Kuropatkin to say that not only could he hold his positions, but could, if necessary, even take the offensive immediately with every hope of success.

“Among other incidents of the fighting,

the Russians pursued two Japanese battalions through the kao-liang grass to Saitzza, and surrounded them. A desperate fight ensued. The Japanese refused to accept quarter, preferring death to surrender. The Russians would have liked to spare them, but they had no alternative in the circumstances but to kill them all.

"In another part of the field the Japanese reached a trench which had been abandoned by the Russians. Another Japanese force, in the belief that the trench was held by the enemy, shelled the position, and then captured it by assault. It was only on reaching the trench that they realised they had killed their own comrades. They fell on the prostrate bodies in the trenches, covering them with their tears.

"The Russian Frontier Guards remained at their posts, and died refusing to surrender. It was the anniversary of the creation of their regiment, and they had spent the previous night in celebrating the event, singing the military songs as is the usual custom of the Russian troops, in spite of constant alarms. The regiment lost a large number of its officers on this fatal day.

"The Russian soldiers worship their guns and quote the words of General Kuropatkin, who said to them, 'Soldiers, die for your guns as you would for your flags.' The pits dug by the Russians in the kao-liang grass were filled with Japanese corpses, over which their comrades passed. The Russian evacuation of the forts and entrenchments was carried out without loss. The troops crossed the river by the pontoon bridges and the railway bridge in perfect order and safety."

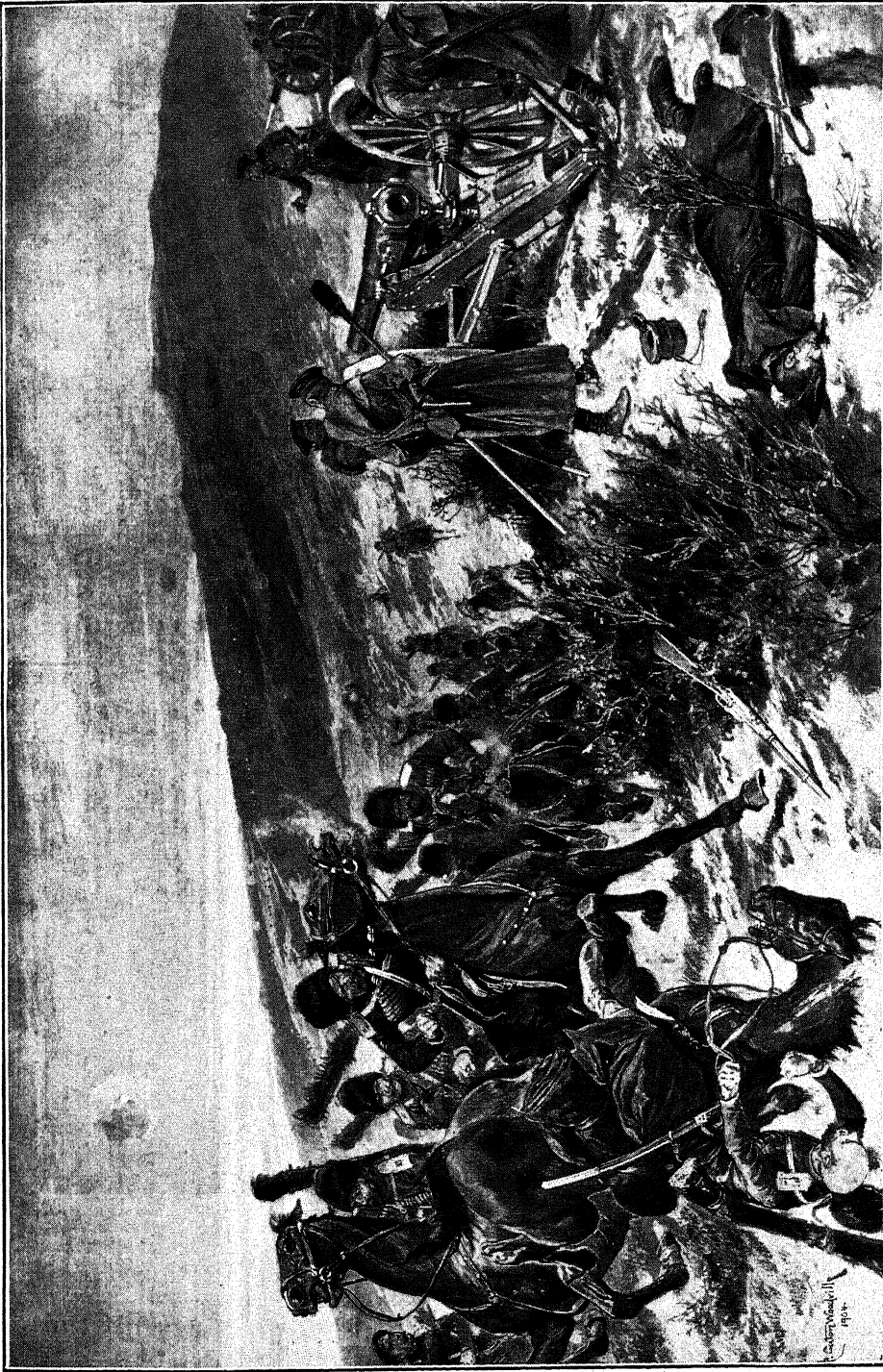
We must now turn our attention to General Kuroki's army, which we left

on August 28th with its right and centre columns preparing to move northwards with a view to crossing the Tai-tse river in order to attempt the severance of the Russian communications.

It will be remembered that on the 28th General Nozu detached the 10th Division for the purpose of co-operating with Kuroki's army. This division was still seeking a junction when at 6 a.m. on the 30th it found itself confronted by the enemy on the hills to the east of Dawa, and forthwith opened an artillery fire upon him. This was followed by an infantry attack, which at first promised to be successful. But at 10 a.m. a large column from Liao-yang came out in reinforcement of the Russians, augmenting the latter's force to two divisions with 50 or 60 guns. The Russians now assumed the offensive, and made a strong attack, which the 10th Division must have had great difficulty in resisting. However, by 3 p.m., after a hot and gallant struggle, a junction was effected with the left column of Kuroki's army, which, as mentioned in the last chapter, had been a good deal delayed by the stout opposition it had encountered in its march up from Pe-ling-zu. The two united columns now had little difficulty in tackling the Russians and forcing them to retire. Subsequently, the left column of the First Army moved in a north-easterly direction from the neighbourhood of Dawa so as to form, as illustrated in the map of this Phase on page 109, a screen in front of the Russian left.

Meanwhile, the right and centre columns of Kuroki's army are moving in order to carry out, if possible, the arduous task assigned to them. Such troops as are on the left bank of the Tang-ho recross the river with a view to making the passage of the Tai-tse at





BACK TO SHELTER: COSSACKS, REPULSED DURING A RECONNAISSANCE IN FORCE, RETIRING UNDER COVER OF THEIR OWN GUNS.





points not commanded by the Russian guns posted on the hills near Si-kwan-tun. August 29th and 30th are occupied in the necessary concentration and reconnaissance, and at about midnight on the 30th the passage of the river begins. The right column crosses in its entirety, but the centre leaves a portion to assist the left column in its work of keeping the Russian left occupied. The Tai-tse is in flood, but the Japanese are characteristically prepared for all contingencies, having brought their extremely serviceable pontoons with them from the Yalu.

An interesting experience befalls the correspondents with General Kuroki's central column on August 30th. On this date they catch their first sight of Liao-yang, which for the last few days, although within comparatively easy distance, has been hidden by intervening hills. One can hardly hope to vie with an eye-witness in trying to reproduce an impression of this kind, and on that account, as well as for its intrinsic merits, the following passage is borrowed *verbatim* from the account given by the Special Correspondent of the *Standard* :—

"From the summit of a lofty mountain I now looked down on a plain which stretches far away north, to the very fringe of the mysterious desert of Gobi. The interminable expanse of green and brown seemed to be dotted with dark graves. At our feet flowed the waters of the Tai-tse river, within whose sinuous embrace lay the destined city. Above the houses rises a famous pagoda, dedicated to the eight incarnations of Buddha. Among the trees gleamed the walls of houses. Vast stores were scattered over the plain; and far away to the north was the white trail of the railway line. To the west of Liao-yang the flats spread like a desert. To the south were a few

low ridges and isolated hills. To the east was the tossing sea of mountains over which the Japanese troops had painfully toiled, but not in vain.

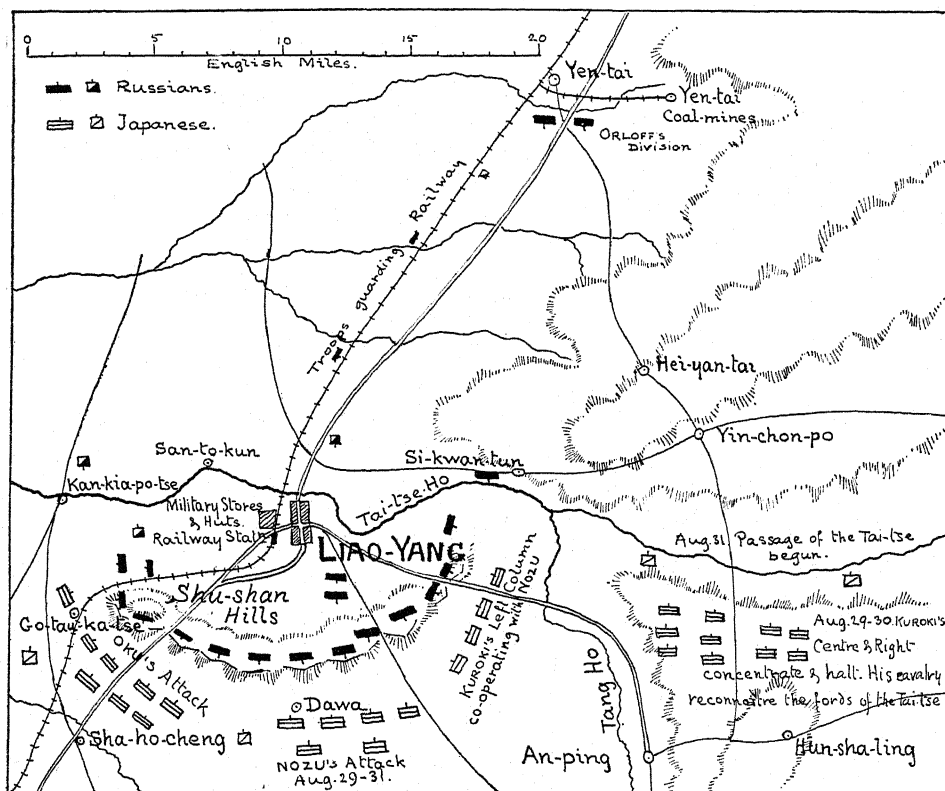
"Conscious of its impending doom, the city of Liao-yang awaited the assault which was to mark the end of the First Phase of the memorable war between the East and West. The stillness which hung over the scene was charged like a thundercloud with the certainties of fate, yet only to the experienced eye was there any visible sign of the mighty struggle upon which we were about to enter. On the crests and slopes of the hilly ridges south and east of the city lay the legions of the Czar. On the plain and behind the low ranges were batteries of artillery, presently to awake in thunders. Nearer to me, on the level country, south, east, and west of the city, the soldiers of Japan stood to arms, never for a moment doubting of the issue of the coming contest. Their regiments, brigades, and divisions were stretched out like one great circle, ready to close the road of escape to the north, and at the same time overwhelm the tranquil-looking city."

On August 31st General Kuroki's right column and the bulk of his centre column, having successfully crossed the Tai-tse-ho, pushed steadily on in a north-westerly direction, driving back the enemy's infantry where found, and occupying without Pen-si-hu, where the existence of important fortifications had favoured expectation of a stout resistance. During the night of the 31st the field guns, which were waiting for the river to be bridged, crossed and joined the force. At this point, which marks the close of what we have regarded as the Second Phase of the battle of Liao-yang, we will leave General Kuroki, just as we left Generals

Oku and Nozu, in a highly dramatic situation, the further and final development of which must be left until the next chapter.

But some special attention must be paid to this remarkable movement on military grounds. In the first place, it is impossible to realise it properly, even

kept as many Russian troops as possible occupied south of the Tai-tse. But think of the higher generalship required to control such a movement as Kuroki's, and at the same time to direct such a series of almost frantic attacks as those launched by Oku and Nozu against the bristling entrenchments and frowning



BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG: SECOND PERIOD, AUGUST 29-31.

*Attack on the inner line. Beginning of Kuroki's flank movement.*

from the tactical standpoint, unless one remembers what was going on simultaneously in other parts of the fighting area. We know that it was General Kuroki's business to dash northwards and attempt to isolate Liao-yang, while Oku's and Nozu's armies, and such part of Kuroki's as could be, or had to be, left behind,

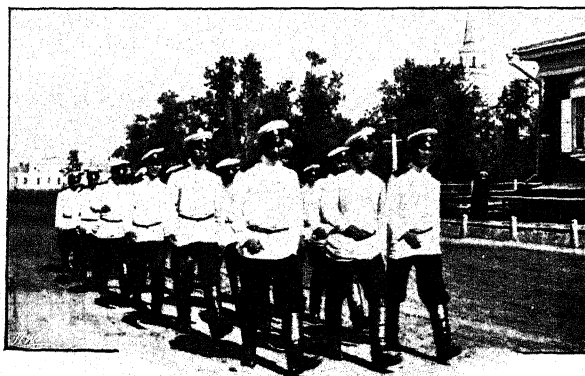
artillery on the Shu-shan hills. No pen can accurately convey the immensity of conception, the variety of execution, included in this vast simultaneous manipulation of military force. The only way in which those interested in such exercises can hope to gain any realistic idea of an operation like this is by moving mimic

units over a large scale map with great deliberation, and filling in the intervals with as much industrious imaginativeness as possible. By a careful collation of dates and hours it may then, sometimes, be found remotely possible to form a vague idea of the responsibilities of a general who has to keep 200,000 men and 600 guns moving against a strong and skilful adversary.

What a day of tremendous, many-sided action must August 31st have been on the Japanese side alone in that great twenty-mile arc of a circle which was bent round Liao-yang from the west of the Shu-shan hills to the north of the Tai-tse-ho! From one end of the fighting front of Oku's and Nozu's armies to the other, the glorious infantry of Japan were hurling themselves with sublime intrepidity against positions held by some of the most stubborn soldiery in the world, behind shelters devised by engineers second to none in experience and skill. From hundreds of iron throats shot and shell were being vomited almost ceaselessly. Even the cavalry were not allowed to be idle in the midst of this intense preoccupation. Yet this was but the secondary part to that being played by Kuroki's force now moving swiftly onward in the

hope of dealing a far more deadly blow against Russia than can be dealt in a score of desperate assaults on the Shu-shan hills, or a week of furious fighting on the banks of the Tang. How can we hope in cold words to do justice to the almost pathetically laborious foresight involved in the mere preparation of such a plan, to the iron tenacity of purpose and wholesale sacrifice necessary to its grim and sanguinary execution?

And what of Kuropatkin during this fateful period of storm and stress? The star of his military luck may not be in the ascendant, but never more brightly shone his military genius. He has been cornered before he deems himself fully ready, but he faces the situation on the whole finely, and the skill with which he extricates himself from it is a revelation. The full beauty of his performance cannot yet be made clear without undue anticipation. But it may be said that on the night of August 31st, when the final orders were given for the withdrawal from the Shu-shan hills position, and Mishtchenko's command was at once transferred to the trans-Tai-tse region, Kuropatkin did more to help Russia and hinder Japan than has been done in any month since the outbreak of the war.



RUSSIAN CADETS.

(From Foster Fraser's "The Real Siberia.")

## CHAPTER LVII.

BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG, THIRD PHASE—KUROPATKIN SAVES THE SITUATION—RUSSIAN MOVEMENTS—SCENES IN LIAO-YANG—JAPANESE OPERATIONS—CAPTURE OF LIAO-YANG—KUROKI'S FLANKING MOVEMENT.

ON September 1st—the anniversary of Sedan!—the position round Liao-yang may be summarised as follows:—During the previous night Kuropatkin, realising that his main danger lay to the north-east, from which quarter it was now clear that Kuroki would presently seek to cut the Russian line of retreat, had withdrawn the bulk of the troops still remaining in Liao-yang, and had started northwards towards Yen-tai, in order to secure his threatened flank of communication with Mukden. Kuroki, having crossed the Tai-tse-ho with a large portion at least of his army, was now striking north-westwards in the hope of reaching the railway before the main Russian force could be disentangled from Liao-yang. In Liao-yang itself a comparatively small body of Russians—possibly numbering about 30,000—was fighting what was to all intents and purposes a rear-guard action against the Army of General Oku stiffened by General Nozu's Fifth Division. The latter forces, after the frightful struggle of August 31st, were now taking possession of the Shu-shan Hills position to the south of Liao-yang, but were at present powerless to press beyond it. Utterly exhausted by their tremendous efforts, they had still before them an enemy which, if shaken, was yet capable of further dogged resistance, and was by no means badly posted to resist a further precipitate advance.

There is another explanation of this lull in the Japanese advance from the south. Even if General Oku had imagined that he could now capture Liao-yang by a *coup de main*, he would probably have been held back from any such enterprise by his superior officer, Field-Marshal Oyama. The end and aim of all the appalling sacrifices made by Japan in the past week of close and bitter fighting have been, as was evident from the first, not so much the capture of the Russian military capital of Manchuria as the complete enclosure of the main Russian Army. Liao-yang, it well may have been anticipated by Japanese students of military history, would prove a sort of Sedan for Holy Russia. Just as the French Army, with its veteran Commander *hors de combat*, was crowded into Sedan or under its walls with nearly 500 Prussian guns playing on it, so the Japanese may have pictured the Russian Army of Manchuria caught at Liao-yang, and either annihilated or forced to surrender. And, with such a picture before its eyes, the General Staff at Tokio would hardly have allowed Oku to consider himself at liberty to expel—if he could—what he probably supposed to be a very large retaining force from Liao-yang before he knew that Kuroki was in a position to intercept it.

But whether this interesting tactical speculation be sound or not, the point we have now to consider is that, in reality,

the anniversary of Sedan marks the opening of a new Phase of the Liao-yang Battle at the very point at which the likelihood of an envelopment has been dispelled. Not any mistake on the part of Kuroki, not any hesitancy on that of Oku and Nozu, but the combined luck and judgment of Kuropatkin have already saved the situation for Holy Russia. What the Russian Commander-in-Chief is doing resembles what Wellington did on August 21st at Vimiera, although the result is hardly what it was in Wellington's case. Still there is a fair comparison to be drawn between the manner in which the Great Duke, then Sir Arthur Wellesley, transferred four brigades from his right to his left almost at the moment of contact, and Kuropatkin's masterly withdrawal of the greater part of his army from Liao-yang to the right bank of the Tai-tse-ho in order to fend off Kuroki from the railway and the road to the north.

Let us commence our study of the Third Phase of the Battle of Liao-yang by a glance at the Russian movements from the night of August 31st onwards. In one of his simple and soldierly despatches Kuropatkin himself gives a summary of his plan, which, if studied in connection with the map of the Third Phase printed on page 141 of this narrative, will go far towards increasing the interest and instructiveness of the entire operation. In Kuropatkin's own words, "The troops having crossed to the right bank, the Army was to take up positions between the village of Si-kwan-tun and the heights near the Yen-tai coal-mines, which were to have been occupied by Major-General Orloff's detachment, composed of thirteen battalions. Taking a position near Si-kwan-tun as a pivot, the Army was to have effected a move-

ment to the right to flank the Japanese positions, which extended from the Tai-tse, near the village of Kwan-tun, towards the Yen-tai collieries."

It will be seen that the second half of the plan introduces a new development. Kuropatkin evidently hoped that he would be enabled not only to hurl Kuroki back, but to turn the tables on him by a flanking movement which would have the effect of cutting him off completely from the Armies of Generals Oku and Nozu. This idea was not destined to be realised, but the mere conception is a strong and able one, and shows that Kuropatkin, throughout this anxious period, not only kept his head as to the immediate business in hand—that of extricating his army from a cunningly thrown net—but displayed that peculiarly high form of generalship which consists in a fine attempt to push home a counterstroke.

There is something particularly grand—and, indeed, it is the grandeur of this idea which dominates the whole of this phase—in the spectacle of Kuropatkin at this moment playing his best card for the honour of Russia and his Imperial Master. What the Russian Commander-in-Chief's difficulties at this moment were it is almost impossible to realise. With a powerful and relentless enemy in the Viceroy, he was well aware that anything which could be done by Alexeieff to thwart his plans, to magnify his failures, to belittle his success, would be done as a matter of course. At home the intrigues against him would continue whatever the result of the present conflict. But far more pressing than either of these embarrassments must have been the bitter reflection that there were elements of rottenness in his own army, to the existence of which allusion has already been made, and which were beyond

hope of removal for some time to come. Kuropatkin's feelings when he heard of the poor show made on the banks of the Tang especially are better imagined than described, and it is a striking tribute to his magnificent *sang-froid* that, even with his confidence sapped by such a miserable exhibition, he should have launched his main army

taking place. As for the officers, the heroes of the Pagoda Gardens and other "unworthy places," to quote the words of Reuter's correspondent, they, too, must have felt a little dismayed at the prospect of being suddenly deprived of the doubtful pleasures which had, so far, helped to alleviate the hardships of campaigning. But officers and men,



MAJOR-GENERAL ORLOFF.

on the greatest and most daring operation he had as yet undertaken.

Something is due, too, to the Russian troops for the manner in which they pulled themselves together at this crisis. Taught to believe that the great Russian victory of the war would be won long before the Japanese could reach Liaoyang, the simple soldiery must have felt their last hopes slipping from them when, on the night of August 31st, it became evident that a general retirement was

whatever may have been their private sensations, seemed to have risen to the occasion. Whether Kuropatkin resorted, as he has so often done, to personal exhortation, coupled with some drastic measures of correction, we have no means of knowing. It may be that at last it was beginning to dawn on all ranks of the Russian Army in Manchuria that, even individually, the Japanese soldier was a match—and often more than a match—for the soldier of the Tsar. But,

be the reason what it may, there is no question that the manner in which the withdrawal of the main army from Liao-yang on the night of August 31st was effected reflected the greatest credit upon all concerned.

It must have been a strange and inspiring spectacle. It will be remembered that this was a military movement only, since not until the next morning was the order received for non-combatants to leave the town, and for another two days the latter was still to be in some sort of Russian occupation. But during the night of August 31st an imaginative observer might have heard an imaginary bell ringing dully a very dismal chime—the death-knell of, at any rate, the present existence of Liao-yang as the centre of Russia's military interests in the Far East. Streaming columns of men, weary lines of waggons conveying wounded, had told, towards nightfall, a tale of desperate fighting, of which, on the same scale and in the same quarter, there would be no renewal. And now, as the columns of troops and lines of transport pass through and to the side of Liao-yang, and the centre of activity is shifted to the bridges, permanent and pontoon, which span the Tai-tse in the neighbourhood of the town, another chapter is being unfolded. To the actual onlooker it bodes not well, this transfer of the bulk of the army from one threatened quarter to another, while as yet there is no news of a Japanese repulse. Presently the rumour gains strength that this is no tactical movement undertaken to snatch or drive home a victory, and to render secure by heavy blows dealt upon the advancing enemy. It becomes known that these battalions and batteries are marching in from abandoned positions, which the Japanese will surely occupy to-

tomorrow, and are doing so in order to meet a fresh attack far away on the north-east. The question is asked, what would the success of that fresh attack mean? Would it not be followed, more especially now that the advanced defences to the south, upon which such care has been lavished, have been left to the Japanese to enter at their leisure, by an envelopment from which no escape would be possible? One may well imagine that a prospect of this sort was profoundly objectionable to the variegated mass of humanity which the presence of the Russian headquarters in Liao-yang had collected. Yet for the moment the steady tramp of battalion after battalion towards the river may have served to kindle a hope that, after all that has happened, Kuropatkin's patience was to be rewarded, and that a concentrated effort would serve to hurl the Yaponskis back in disastrous rout.

At the river itself the arrangements made for crossing seem to have worked admirably. Several subsidiary pontoon bridges had been constructed, and the roads to and from them clearly marked out, with the result that, notwithstanding the darkness of the night, "all the troops destined to take the offensive"—to use Kuropatkin's own words—were safely on the right bank of the river. This must be reckoned a remarkable performance in the circumstances, and spectacularly the scene afforded by this rapid passage of a great body of troops over the pontoon and other bridges available must have been an impressive one. What might have happened had Oku's and Nozu's troops been in a position at this juncture to deliver a night attack is, perhaps, an idle speculation; but it may assist one to understand the risk run in



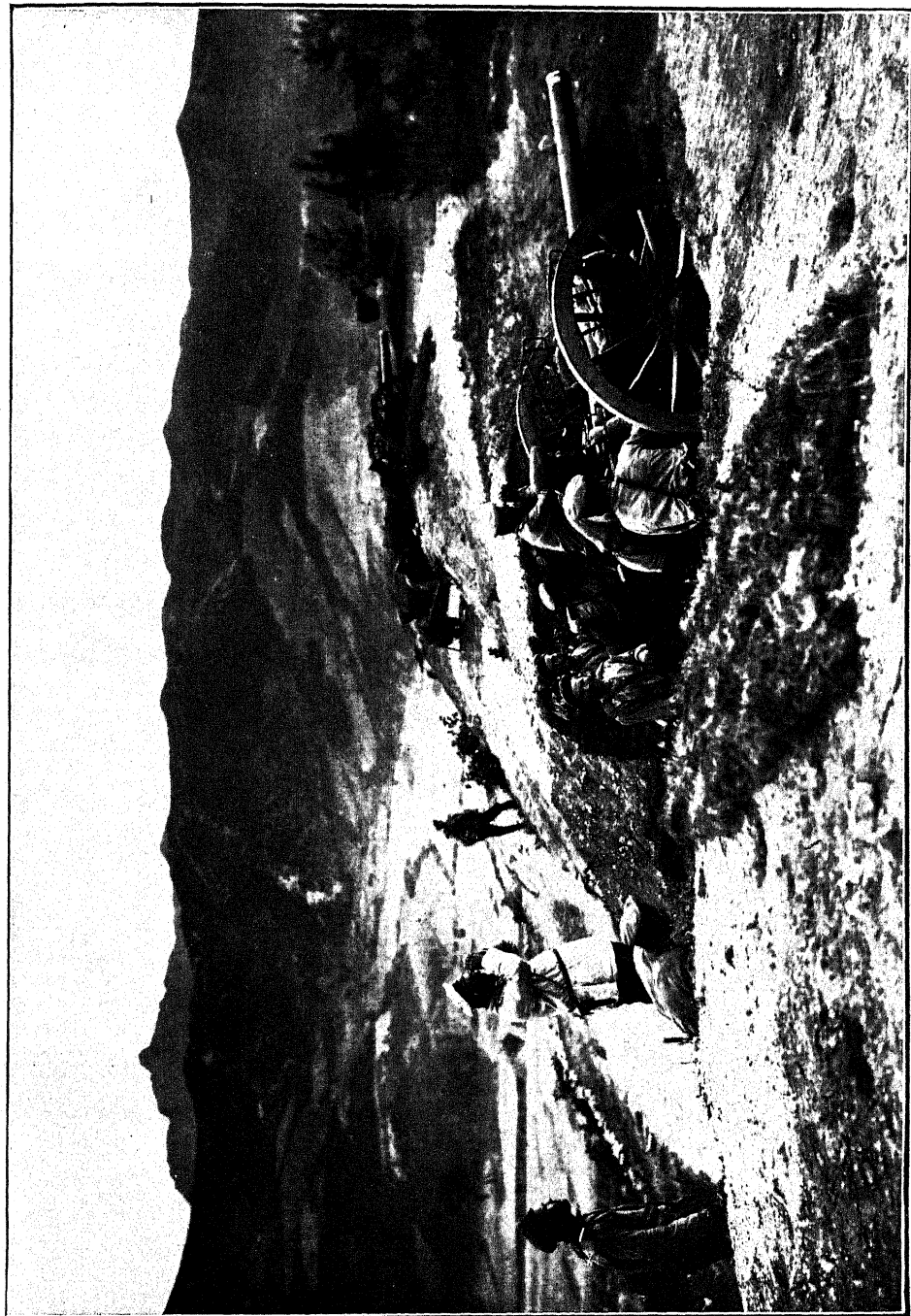


Photo: "Collier's Weekly," WITH GENERAL KUROPATKIN'S GUNS OUTSIDE LIAO-YANG.

carrying out a movement of this kind, practically speaking in the presence of the enemy. The reflection should also increase our admiration of the steadiness and precision with which the work was carried out, and the forethought displayed in the arrangements which made such a result possible.

Leaving Kuropatkin's "troops destined to take the offensive" on the right bank of the Tai-tse-ho, let us now return to Liao-yang, the inner line of defences to the south of which are now being held by a rear-guard still, apparently, under command of General Greikoff. On the morning of September 1st all non-combatants were ordered to leave Liao-yang, the Chinese being given two days in which to remove themselves and their belongings. It was observed that the Japanese were beginning to take possession of the Shu-shan Hills position, and about midday this fact became unpleasantly clearer. It has been mentioned before that at Liao-yang the chief centre of activity is the railway station, and at the latter the main point of assembly seems still to have been the buffet. Here about noon on the 1st was the special correspondent of the *Paris Temps* with a crowd of other customers, when suddenly a shell burst fifty yards away, followed by a second, and then a third. "The crowd rushed to the platform. The line was occupied by ambulance trains. Several persons were killed, and a Sister of Charity was wounded. In the mad hubbub everyone ran away without his baggage. The Chinese coolies pilaged everything, while the Cossacks fell upon the champagne. The station hands displayed admirable coolness. The trains started in good order."

As a fitting pendant to this graphic little pen-sketch may be quoted the allu-

sion of Reuter's correspondent to the opening stages of the bombardment which followed. "Shells burst over the post-office, the Red Cross tents, the station garden, the hospital, and also in the park under the ancient Pagoda, where a crowd of people who had been refreshing themselves at a restaurant there, headed by the restaurant keepers, fled helter-skelter with panic-stricken officers, orderlies, and a horde of miscellaneous people seeking refuge behind the north wall of the city. The Chinese immediately began looting, but swift punishment overtook them."

How often one is reminded in this war of Russian incapacity to realise the presence of danger, coupled with the exhibition of a disregard which is neither dignified nor simply courageous, but grossly foolhardy! Of course, a man must eat, and many of the frequenters of the buffet and the Pagoda restaurants may simply have been snatching a meal in the intervals of real business. But many more must have been mere loafers unwilling to tear themselves away from the chance of a little dissipation in "good company" until the advent of winged messengers of death in the shape of shells scatters them in shameless flight. More businesslike, but hardly more edifying, is the behaviour of the Asiatic element. The Cossack falls upon the abandoned champagne, the Chinaman upon the derelict property. Meanwhile the Japanese guns thunder from the everlasting hills, and the Ta Pagoda (see Vol. I., page 558), the oldest inhabitant of Liao-yang by three centuries at least, solemnly awaits its chance of being reduced to ignominious dust along with the mushroom structures of Russian "civilisation." It is a queer mixed picture this, not of real warfare, but of what may

be termed the "behind-the-scenes" of war.

But we must not tarry with the perturbed "customers" at the various drinking-places of Liao-yang. It is necessary now to cross over to the Japanese side, and in doing so we may again have preliminary recourse to the splendid account given of the operations of General Oku's force by the special correspondent of the *Times*. The latter begins by explaining how, on September 1st, he arose from his bivouac in a Chinese village to find the Japanese infantry in possession of the whole southern Russian position, namely, the line from Mount Shu-shan to the rough country seized by General Nozu's 5th Division. "As seen from the summit of the position Liao-yang lay in the plain due north, a walled city with a predominating pagoda." The correspondent continues:—

"The general impression was that we had only to advance to occupy the town, but the armies of General Oku and General Nozu required a day's rest. In fifty hours the former had made four general infantry assaults which had failed, and had subsisted through the inclement weather solely on rations carried on the person, while the reserve of ammunition had to be replenished.

"The Russians had fallen back in good order, taking everything with them except some 200 of their latest dead, while the only prisoners who fell into Japanese hands were seven men who were entombed in an observation mine casemate on the brush-covered hill. The Japanese storming party had piled sandbags over the orifice of the casemate. It was altogether an extraordinary incident, for the entombed Russians had shot two officers who wished to parley with them, and eventually surrendered thirty-six hours

later. They were in a horrible state, three being desperately wounded.

"I will not dwell on the sickening and harrowing sights of the battlefield except to mention one incident in the centre. Here during the evening assault on the 31st the stormers of the 1st Battalion of the 34th Regiment had penetrated to the highest trench and had overpowered the Baikal Cossacks who were holding it, but supports from the splinter-proof shelter behind had fallen with their bayonets on the gallant Japanese in the moment of their success, and the bodies of both Japanese and Cossacks lay piled thick upon each other in a hideous heap."

A little later the *Times* representative adds:—

"I returned to our bivouac over the battlefield through acres of millet, where the Japanese infantry had been mown down in hundreds. Already twenty or thirty columns of smoke showed where the Japanese dead had been collected for cremation. I visited several dressing stations of the field hospital. All were filled to double their capacity. The victims were cheerful, glorying in their wounds. The hospital arrangements were splendid, but the position was taken at a terrible cost. The casualties of the Japanese five divisions at the lowest computation were not less than 10,000, and probably were more, for owing to the crops many wounded were not found, and must have died miserably, while many bodies will never be found until the crops are cut.

"All the time reserves were passing up to the fighting line to fill the vacancies, while trains of ammunition carts were hastening forward. It is impossible even to conjecture what the expenditure was. An examination of the enemy's trenches showed that the Japanese shell fire was

not so devastating as was anticipated, and, as I surmised, only charges of shrapnel were found in the Russian batteries, whose fire was indirect from the reverse of the position throughout.

"It is impossible to estimate the Russian losses, but, giving the Japanese shrapnel its due, and knowing that the rifles of the 5th Division did great execution among the enemy retreating from the bushy hill, I should say that they amounted to half those of the attacking force. It must be remembered that my estimate of the Japanese casualties does not include those of the 10th Division nor those suffered by General Kuroki's force."

About noon on September 1st, as has already been indicated in the account of the Russian movements, the Japanese began firing on the Liao-yang railway station, subsequently extending the bombardment to other parts of the town. Meanwhile the captured positions were more completely occupied, and at night-fall the tired soldiers of Japan bivouacked within about six miles of the "Russian military capital of Manchuria."

At daybreak on September 2nd a movement was made towards Liao-yang by the armies of Oku and Nozu. It was soon discovered that the Russians intended to make a stubborn defence in a position closely screening the town itself. In the accompanying map of the Third Phase of the Battle the railway is very clearly shown entering Liao-yang on the western side, the station being separately marked. The existence of what might be termed a suburban line of defences was mentioned in the last chapter, and it is now only necessary to explain that the position ran from the west of the railway eastwards through the southern suburbs, and then turned up north towards the

Tai-tse-ho. A corresponding curve was followed by the attacking forces, the respective arcs being perhaps four and twelve miles in length.

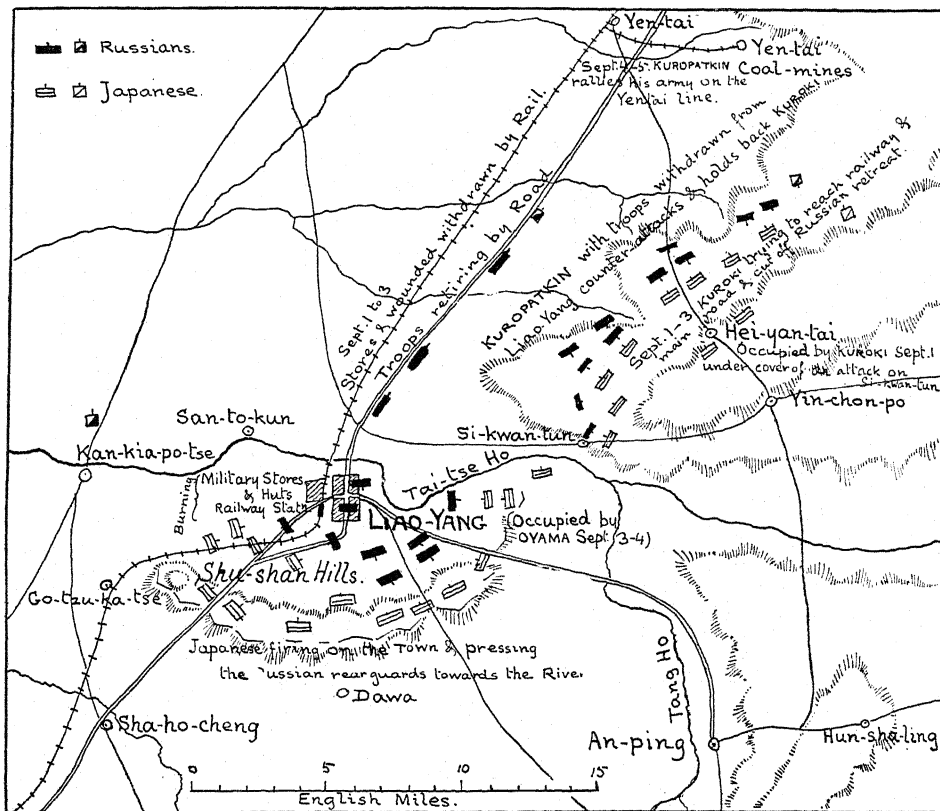
The fighting on September 2nd need not be closely followed, although interesting from the expert standpoint, and throughout of a very brisk and vigorous sort. The Japanese pushed the advance manfully, though obviously still tired, and the Japanese artillery came into combined action with much spectacular impressiveness. But the Russians showed no signs of yielding, and, to quote General Oku's report, owing to the strength of their defences and the desperate character of their resistance sunset came before the Japanese could push the advance home. During the night an isolated attempt was made to charge some of the forts on the Russian right, but failed owing to the obstacles encountered and a scathing cross-fire from the Russian machine guns.

"At dawn on September 3rd," writes General Oku in his official despatch, "our guns reopened fire and the enemy continued his obstinate resistance; whereupon our guns were advanced within rifle range with the object of breaching the forts and silencing the machine guns. As a result one part of the enemy's force seemed disordered, but the remainder stood firm. Our artillery, therefore, concentrated again, pending a general attack by the infantry, which had gradually crept up within 200 to 300 metres of the enemy's position. Finally at 7 p.m., while the whole of the artillery redoubled their fire, the infantry charged along the entire line. A heavy fight ensued, lasting into the night, but at 12.30 a.m. the enemy's position was completely forced, and the line of fortifications was captured amid vociferous cheering."

It is difficult to imagine from the above

terse paragraph that what is alluded to is, in one sense, the climax of the great Battle of Liao-yang, in other words, the capture of Liao-yang itself! And yet there is, perhaps, something of dramatic appropriateness in thus placing at any rate the outline of the *dénouement* before

Russians time after time hurling back with stubborn vigour these frantic onslaughts until plain and slopes were strewn with corpses. For days past we have watched artillery duels alternating with infantry rushes; have noted the heavy smoke from bursting shells relieved



BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG: THIRD PERIOD, SEPTEMBER 1-3.

Kuropatkin holds Kuroki by vigorous counter attacks and gradually evacuates Liao-yang.

our readers in the brief and simple words of the Japanese Commander chiefly responsible for the great result in question. We have already had to pass under review a long sequence of desperate attacks, informed with splendid valour, and superbly typical of the fighting spirit of the Island Nation. We have seen the

by the sharp flashes from answering guns; have realised that yonder fair standing crops have been but so much cover for ghastly carnage. Why tell in slightly altered language the tale of another day's deadly struggle fought out on almost identical lines? Better, surely, to join Oku's and Nozu's gallant fellows

in their final irresistible charge, which was to be followed a few hours later by the complete Japanese occupation of Kuropatkin's former stronghold.

But, perhaps, some of us might like to choose our place in that glorious movement. With many the preference might lie with the grand 20th Regiment, which formed part of Nozu's force, and which had already suffered terrible losses during the past few days. Its regimental commander and one battalion had fallen near An-shan-shan. Two more battalion commanders had been killed at Weijago, near Dawa, in the Second Phase of the fighting. On September 2nd the regiment lost its new colonel commanding and two new battalion commanders. There was thus none left on the 3rd to take the regimental command, which was accordingly assumed by Major-General Marui.

General Nozu in his official despatch gives a stirring account of the behaviour of this magnificent corps in the final struggle of September 3rd. Its leading line was almost swept away, and, although stiffened by reserves, the regiment was wavering under a withering fire when Captain Egami led the colour company in advance of the skirmishers, whereupon the whole regiment charged furiously, tore away the obstacles, and carried the opposing forts, cheering for the Emperor. Some idea of the terrific casualties entailed on individual corps by the fighting on September 3rd may be gathered from the fact that one battalion of the 20th Regiment lost every officer, the command of companies being assumed by first-class privates; one company was reduced to fourteen or fifteen men, and the regiment's total casualties were 1,200 to 1,300.

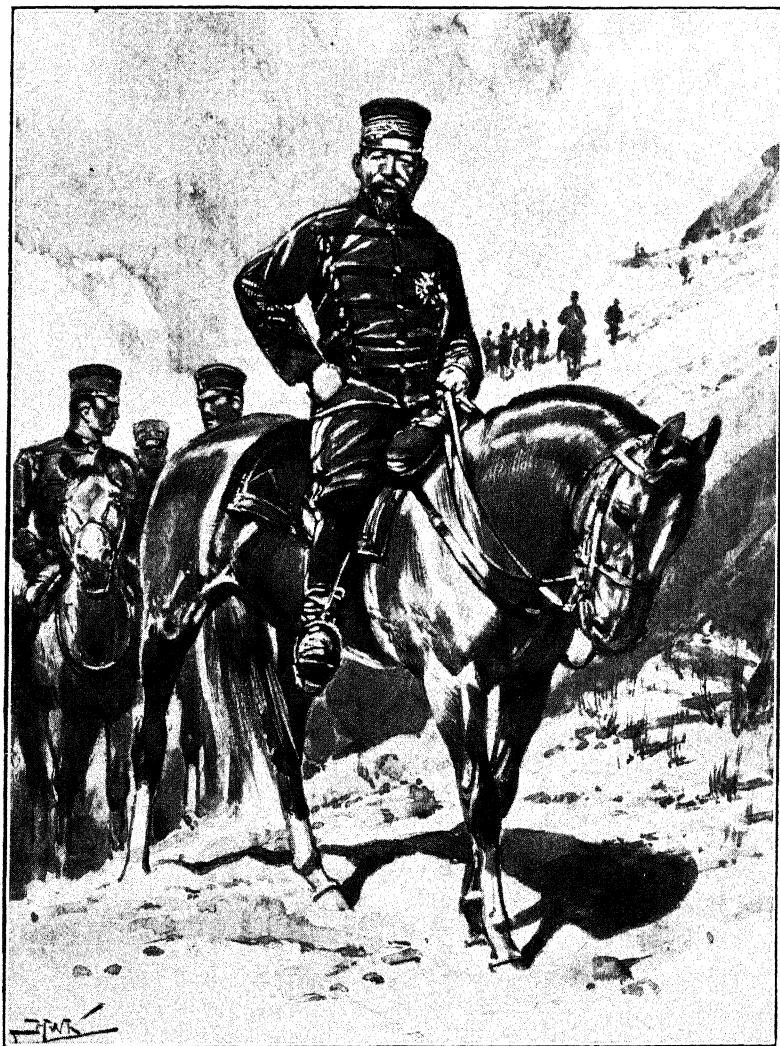
While the armies of Oku and Nozu

were thus successfully pressing home their final assault—the eighth in five days—upon the inner defences of Liao-yang, the Russian rearguard was making strenuous preparations for retirement. On the whole the usual preliminaries to evacuation were carried out well, and it was afterwards remarked that the spoils of war which fell into Japanese hands were quite insignificant when one considers the former importance of Liao-yang as a Russian possession. The railway station and nearly all the warehouses were burned—the rolling stock had been pushed forward previously—the railway bridge was wrecked, and a quantity of ammunition and provisions was destroyed. The actual falling-back of the rearguard, too, seems to have been accomplished with considerable steadiness, and, when the passage of the Taitse-ho had been effected, the pontoon bridges were duly dismantled and the pontoons removed. But a regiment which had been stationed in Liao-yang itself had seized the opportunity before retiring to sack all the European shops and many of the houses of the wealthy Chinese. It may be inferred, then, that the night of September 3rd in Liao-yang afforded a good many unlovely scenes, and was thus, perhaps, a not altogether inappropriate termination to the existence of the place as the headquarters of the Russian field army.

Kuropatkin himself, of course, had not witnessed these closing episodes. He had left Liao-yang at eight o'clock in the morning of September 2nd, in the famous train in which so much of his work as Commander-in-Chief had been done for months past. Well may he have felt a pang at being thus unceremoniously forced to leave a place from which it is clear that one time he had hoped

to take a final offensive with an overwhelming army. But, throughout the whole of the war hitherto, Kuropatkin's

yang when he left it, he was the last man to betray any sentimental regrets, or to let bystanders imagine that he



GENERAL BARON OKU.

attitude has been one of stoical indifference to reverses which would have driven many more highly-strung generals crazy, and, although he probably had no illusions on the subject of the fate of Liao-

now felt the ground slipping from under his feet.

The Russian Army, then, main body, Commander-in-Chief, and even rear-guard, is now, at dawn on September



4th, on the right bank of the Tai-tse-ho. Not a live Russian is left in Liao-yang, save a few deserters dressed in Chinese clothes who are hiding among the houses. The Russian settlement is in ruins, and in the old town there is hardly a sign of life. A day or two back the Chinese, on noting the evacuation of the Shu-shan Hills position, had started to make Japanese flags in order to welcome the victors in the great battle. But the looting performances of the 10th Siberian Rifles, and the bombardment of the previous two days, in which a large number had been killed, had sent them bolting into their dens like scared rabbits.

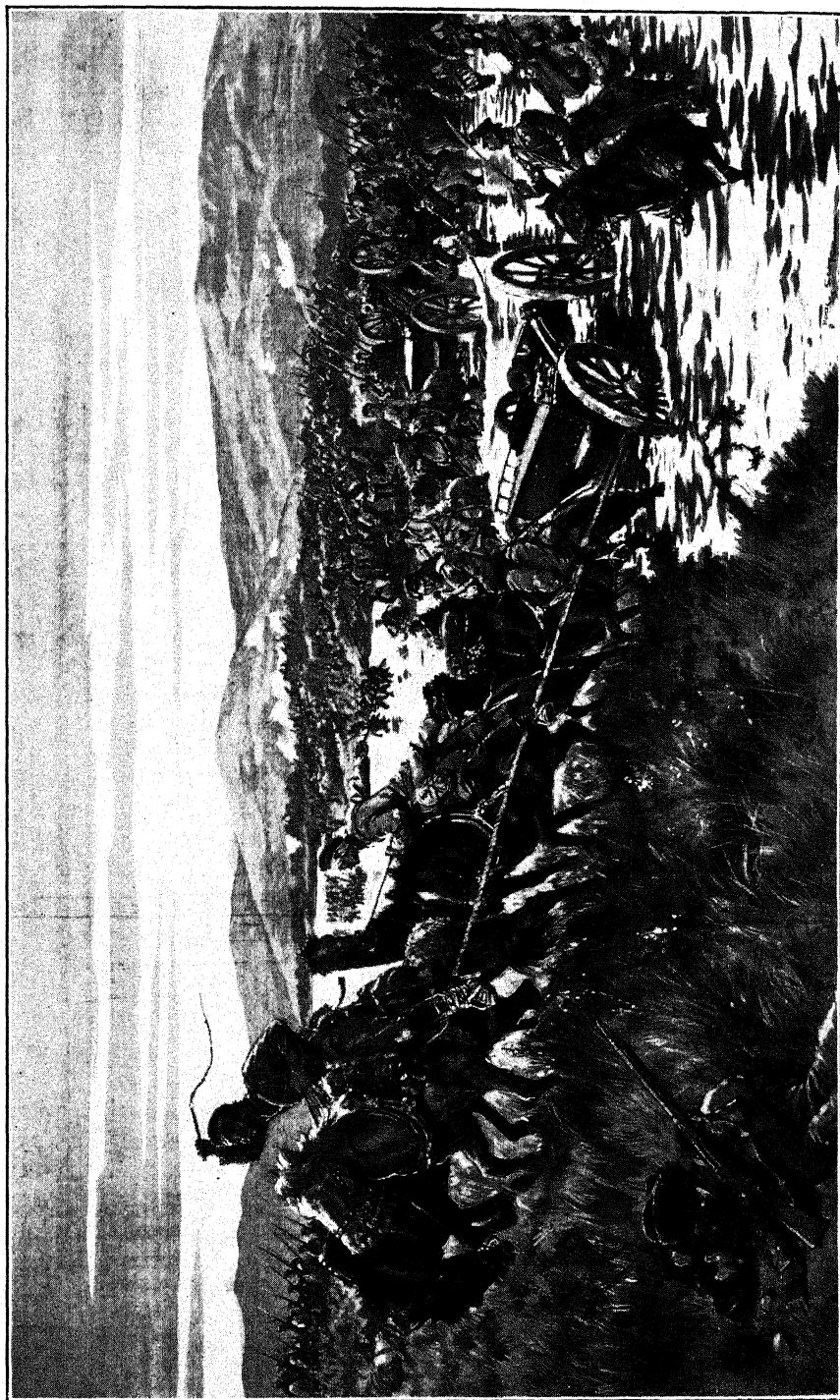
Nor were their troubles now over, for Reuter's correspondent, who had been until recently with the Russian Army, and had been taken unawares by the Japanese entry, reports that the Japanese troops showed for the first time at Liao-yang that lack of restraint which has often been exhibited by European troops in similar circumstances. "They had been fighting for five days without food, except dry rice, and broke loose on entering the town, looting right and left. As the shops had already been rifled, the Japanese turned their attention to private houses. They were chiefly in search of food, but overlooked nothing. . . . Their officers were much disturbed, and the men were finally taken out of the walled city, which they were no longer allowed to enter without a special pass."

While, as has been noted, the legitimate spoils of war which fell into the hands of the Japanese after the capture of Liao-yang were insignificant compared with what they might have been had the retirement been less skilfully conducted, the total is impressive. Putting aside General Kuroki's captures, which include

the eight guns taken at Hun-sha-ling, Generals Oku and Nozu secured nearly 3,000 rifles and about a million rounds of small arms ammunition, some 7,000 rounds of gun ammunition, and a quantity of mixed munitions and provisions.

A rather unnecessary sensation was at first created by the suggestion that the Japanese found among the captured boxes of cartridges a quantity of so-called "Dum-dum" ammunition, our own occasional use of which in past frontier and other expeditions has aroused much humanitarian hubbub. In this instance the fuss and fury were the more superfluous, since on examination the so-called "Dum-dum" bullets proved to be those belonging to revolver cartridges, which are often fitted with a flat-nosed projectile for "man-stopping" purposes. Cases also seem to have occurred in the course of the war of wounds caused by sporting ammunition fired from the sporting carbines carried by Russian officers, just as they were carried by our own officers in South Africa. The point is not one calling for serious discussion, but, as the Japanese laboured it somewhat at the time, it seems desirable in this record to give it passing and explanatory allusion.

As to casualties, these it will never be easy to compute with exactitude. Here again, on the Japanese side, we must first set apart General Kuroki's Army, and having done so we find the official return of the losses of General Oku's Army to be 7,681, and those of General Nozu's Army 4,992. The official telegram from Tokio conveying this information is dated September 11th, by which time the full reports should have been received from the field hospitals. On September 22nd the Russian General Staff at St. Petersburg issued detailed lists of the Russian casual-



THE EARLY DAYS OF LIAO-YANG; KUROPATKIN'S ARTILLERY PASSING THE TAI-TSE-HO.

ties at Liao-yang. The number of men killed was 1,810; 10,811 men were wounded, and 1,212 were left on the field. Of the regimental officers 54 were killed, and three generals were wounded, and five officers were left on the field.

It is not easy to make out whether the Russian lists are really comprehensive, or whether they only include the officers and men who fell in the fighting with Oku's and Nozu's Armies. In the former case the total would have to be balanced by the 4,866 officially reported in General Kuroki's Army, which brings the total Japanese casualties between August 23th and September 4th up to 17,539. Probably a gross total of 35,000 to 40,000 casualties on both sides is not very far from the actual mark.

Before leaving the Armies of Generals Oku and Nozu in order to turn to the details of General Kuroki's flanking movement, it may be of interest to note how it is that such comparatively full and satisfactory information is available concerning not only the movements of these two forces, but also the last stages of the Russian defence. As regards the latter, it has already been mentioned that Reuter's correspondent with the Russian Army was taken unawares by the Japanese, who, it seems, rushed into the town while he, relying on General Sassulitch's assurance that the town would not be evacuated before September 4th, was assisting to tend the Chinese sick and wounded. On the entry of the Japanese he was ordered to consider himself a prisoner, but managed to get a long and vivid despatch placed on the wires before he could be prevented.

The experiences of the special correspondent of the *Times* with General Oku's Army exhibit in a still stronger light the energy and resourcefulness of the

Knights of the Pen under very trying circumstances. Knowing well that it would be hopeless to expect a Japanese censor to pass such a despatch as he proposed to send, this correspondent, after witnessing the occupation of Liao-yang on the afternoon of September 4th, rode out to the Shu-shan Hills, and remained there all night. Early the next morning he left, accompanied by a *confrère*, on horseback, and, riding all day with a Chinese guide, reached old Niu-chwang on a branch of the Liao River towards evening. Here he succeeded in engaging a junk, in which he and his friend proceeded down stream all night and till noon on the following day, when contrary winds made it necessary to abandon the boat. The two correspondents thereupon marched on foot the remaining twenty miles to Ying-kau, where they arrived after dark on the 6th. They crossed the following morning to the railway station, reaching Shan-hai-kwan the same evening. Here the *Times* representative put on the wires one of the finest descriptions of a great operation ever cabled—one which, with much descriptive power, combines a singular sense of proportion and quite exceptional critical faculty.

Let us now turn to General Kuroki's flanking movement. We left the First or Right Army on the morning of September 1st, pushing on from the right bank of the Tai-tse-ho, to which it had just crossed, in a northerly and north-westerly direction. During the day very little progress was made, owing to the increasing strength of the enemy, who was being hourly reinforced by the troops which had been withdrawn during the night from Liao-yang. Throughout the day there was a vigorous interchange both of artillery and rifle fire, but no advantage was gained by either side,

with the possible exception that the first or right Japanese column succeeded in establishing itself in the hills to the east of the Yen-tai coal-mines.

During the night of September 1st-2nd the Japanese delivered a series of attacks, the first column struggling to get nearer to the coal-mines, while the second column attacked the Russian positions at Si-kwan-tun and Hei-yan-tai. The detachment which attacked the Si-kwan-tun ridge was not only heavily cannonaded by the enemy concentrated here, but was sharply counter-attacked at 10 a.m. on the 2nd. Nothing, accordingly, was effected in this direction, but the attack had served to cover a successful movement against Hei-yan-tai. Here some of the bloodiest fighting of the war took place, and it is almost inconceivable that troops should have been found to return to attack after meeting with such terrible experiences as were encountered at this important vantage ground. According to one correspondent the Russians had even gone to the length of defending their trenches with lines of wire highly charged with electricity. The Japanese touching these in the darkness are said to have received severe shocks, while further confusion was caused by hand grenades thrown from the trenches among the attackers.

During September 2nd the Japanese maintained a precarious footing at Hei-yan-tai, exposed to a terrible cross-fire from the Russian batteries on the Si-kwan-tun ridge. "Thus the second column," writes General Kuroki in his official report, "was extremely harassed. The soldiers since the preceding night had not eaten one meal nor drunk a drop of water, subsisting on the few grains of raw rice carried in their wallets."

But where was the third column all

this time? Evidently it was fully occupied in filling up the gap between Hei-yan-tai and the Tai-tse-ho, thus preventing the insertion of the wedge with which Kuropatkin had hoped to cut Kuroki completely off from communication with Oku and Nozu.

At sunset on September 2nd the Russians, with two or three brigades, made a determined effort to recapture Hei-yan-tai. Fortunately a portion of the third column, which had been summoned during the afternoon, advanced and relieved the pressure. But even the combined forces were not able to drive back the enemy. Once, indeed, the Japanese were driven from their trenches, but returned to the struggle and expelled the Russians. Then, it would seem, the Russians counter-attacked a second time, and were badly repulsed.

Reuter's correspondent draws a harrowing picture of the scene after the final struggle at Hei-yan-tai:—

"The spectacle which the hill presented has seldom been equalled in any war. The top of the hill is less than a quarter of a mile long. The crest, slopes, and ravines were literally honeycombed with trenches, ditches, and furrows for shelter. Trenches and counter-trenches ran in every direction, testifying to the number of attacks and the different points from which assaults had been attempted. Close to the summit 200 Russians lay with their rifles where they had fallen. It appeared that they had advanced upon the word of command, and the whole line was mowed down when almost upon the trenches. The bodies were black, having lain there in the sun while the firing was so constant and fierce that the Japanese were unable to bury them. Many corpses were strewn in the fields below. Hundreds of shells had fallen on

the hill, tearing pits and furrows in it. Fragments of steel were everywhere under foot. Several Russian drums and two or three hundred Russian rifles and cooking pots were all torn and shattered by shot, bayonets were twisted and broken, and the rags of uniforms and caps were shot-torn and blood-soaked. Blood was smeared everywhere, in the trenches, and on the turf. It was impossible to step without treading on bullets."

Meanwhile, on September 2nd, the right column of General Kuroki's Army had been heavily engaged near the Yen-tai coal-mines with a Russian force under General Orloff, who was in a strong position on the heights to the north of the mines. General Orloff detached part of his force in order to aid the troops fighting at Si-kwan-tun, and this detachment fell in with the Japanese right column, and was severely handled by it. The Russian troops advanced to the attack through fields of *kao-liang* or tall millet, and were met by such a heavy frontal and flank fire that they became confused and lost their bearings in the *kao-liang*. Eventually they fell back, and subsequently Orloff's main body in the hills also retired westward, the Japanese following and extending northwards until they had occupied the whole range of the hills and the Yen-tai mines. In this movement General Orloff was wounded, and also General Fomin, who later succumbed.

There is no doubt that General Orloff's mismanagement of the part entrusted to him was a great blow to General Kuropatkin. In his report he says, evidently with some bitterness, that at the time of their retirement General Orloff's troops were "within two versts (less than a mile and a half) of the other forces,"

and it is clear that the arrival on the scene at this critical time of a considerable body of comparatively fresh troops might have made all the difference to the Russian Army. There are conflicting stories, but perhaps what was originally intended was that Orloff should advance with his whole force and roll up the Japanese right as soon as the Yen-tai mines were seriously threatened. It is suggested that he was held back by Admiral Alexeieff at Mukden. As we have seen, the whole movement was a fiasco, and the Yen-tai mines, which were of great importance to Russia in connection with the railway, fell into the hands of the Japanese, notwithstanding a desperate final resistance by a dismounted sotnia of Samsonoff's Siberian Cossacks. General Orloff, for his share in this unfortunate performance, was afterwards recalled from the Manchurian Army and, generally speaking, came to be regarded in Russia as having been mainly responsible for the failure to convert the fighting from September 1st to September 3rd into a great Russian victory. Such scapegoats are not uncommon in the history of war!

The repulse of the Russian counter-attacks on Hei-yan-tai practically speaking concluded the fighting part of the Liao-yang battle. On September 3rd, writes General Kuroki, the first and second Japanese columns did not move, but awaited assistance from the third column, which was rendered the more speedily as it was clear that the Russian idea of working round the Japanese left flank had been abandoned.

The fact is that early on September 3rd both armies made discoveries. Kuropatkin found that it would be useless to attempt to take the offensive against Kuroki, and that obviously his best policy

was to get his army away to Mukden as soon as possible. Kuroki, on the other hand, became finally aware that the Russians were too strong for him, and that any hope of rendering his flanking movement effective had evaporated.

The result of these discoveries was apparent in the movements of September

4th. Kuropatkin commenced the withdrawal of his troops towards Mukden; Kuroki advanced a little, and then swung northwards in pursuit. Thus ends the great battle of Liao-yang, of the lessons and incidents of which we may have something more to say in another chapter.



REQUISITIONED MANCHURIAN PONIES BEING ENTRAINED  
IN EASTERN MONGOLIA.

## CHAPTER LVIII.

SIEGE OF PORT ARTHUR CONTINUED—AN INTERMEDIATE STAGE—THE COMMANDANT AND HIS HEROIC WIFE—GARRISON SUMMONED TO SURRENDER—INDIGNANT REJECTION OF TERMS—A GENERAL ASSAULT—TYPICAL FIGHTING—A SECOND ASSAULT—LIFE AT PORT ARTHUR—THRILLING EPISODES—FRESH PREPARATIONS.

ONCE more the imaginary balloon of observation, from which we have looked down on such a long series of stirring scenes in this historic drama, floats over Port Arthur. Once more we see below us the spreading cluster of white houses which marks the European settlement, with the camp and parade grounds to the rear, and the harbour to the front. Once more our eyes wander round the chain of forts, taking in the sea defences of the Tiger's Tail, and that notable work on Golden Hill, from which so many of the naval incidents and accidents of the past half-year have been witnessed. Once more we see beyond the line of Russian fortifications the contracted ring of Japanese investment. Port Arthur besieged claims our attention again, and the spectacle afforded is sufficient, surely, to make us forget for a time even the colossal conflict which is taking place to the north between the main armies of the two combatant nations. For not less indelibly than the Battle of Liao-yang and the operations which followed it will the Siege of Port Arthur be written on the tablets of the world's history. Nor, although it is but an interval in the story of that Siege which we are about to describe, is that interval lacking in episodes fully as inspiring as the fanatical heroism displayed on the slopes of the Shu-shan Hills, fully as dreadful as the holocaust of slaughter

that closed the grim struggle for Hei-yan-tai.

We dropped the narrative of the land operations against Port Arthur at the end of July, by which time the Japanese were in possession of Wolf's Hill, that important eminence half a mile south of Shui-shi-ying, from which it is possible to cast shells through the narrow opening between Obelisk Hill and Poya-shan into Port Arthur Harbour. In Chapter XLVII. the stage we are now entering upon was so far anticipated as to make it clear that the Japanese occupation of Wolf's Hill was swiftly rendered effective by the emplacement of siege guns which, by the end of the first week in August, had begun to rain projectiles upon the fleet at anchor. In Chapter XLIX. the result of this development was dealt with. We saw the harbour becoming untenable, and we followed the Russian Fleet in its disastrous sortie. At nightfall on that memorable August 10th we watched the reduced and crippled squadron crawling back into Port Arthur, the naval strength of which was reported on the following day to consist of the battleships *Peresviet*, *Pobieda*, *Retvisan*, *Poltava*, and *Sevastopol*, the cruisers *Bayan* and *Pallada*, and perhaps a dozen torpedo destroyers. What a day of gloom must August 11th have been for Port Arthur! For, although the departure of the Fleet in the small hours of the previous morning deprived



the garrison of much substantial assistance in the way of long range artillery, there may well have been high hopes cherished of a victory at sea such as could not but lessen the stringency of the blockade even if it did not relieve the pressure of the land investment.

How terrible must have been the drop from any such aspirations, how grim the disappointment, how blank the prospect, as those in Port Arthur who were not busy in the trenches gazed at the remnant, large and still imposing, but sadly battered, of the powerful squadron which only yesterday morning had worked its way out through the heavily-mined harbour entrance into the open sea. In the course of the next few days, too, we may be sure that news began to trickle in showing the real extent of the loss entailed by yesterday's battle: Admiral Vitoft killed; the *Tsarevitch* and *Askold*, and later the *Diana* safe, it is true, in neutral ports, but dismantled; and, lastly, the poor little *Novik* sunk. Those must have been bad days, indeed, for Port Arthur, and worst of all for the sailors who, through the public reproaches cast on Admiral Prince Ukhtomsky, were made to feel that by returning to Port Arthur they had brought on themselves the sharp displeasure of their Imperial Master.

Henceforth, at any rate, during the intermediate stage with which we are now concerned, the main work of defending Port Arthur devolves upon the land forces, and right valiantly do they discharge their responsibilities, sustained daily by fresh tingling exhortations from the indefatigable Stoessel. In Chapter XLVII. we left this heroic Governor going his rounds, outwardly as full of pluck and buoyant energy as possible, but at heart, perhaps, a little despondent,

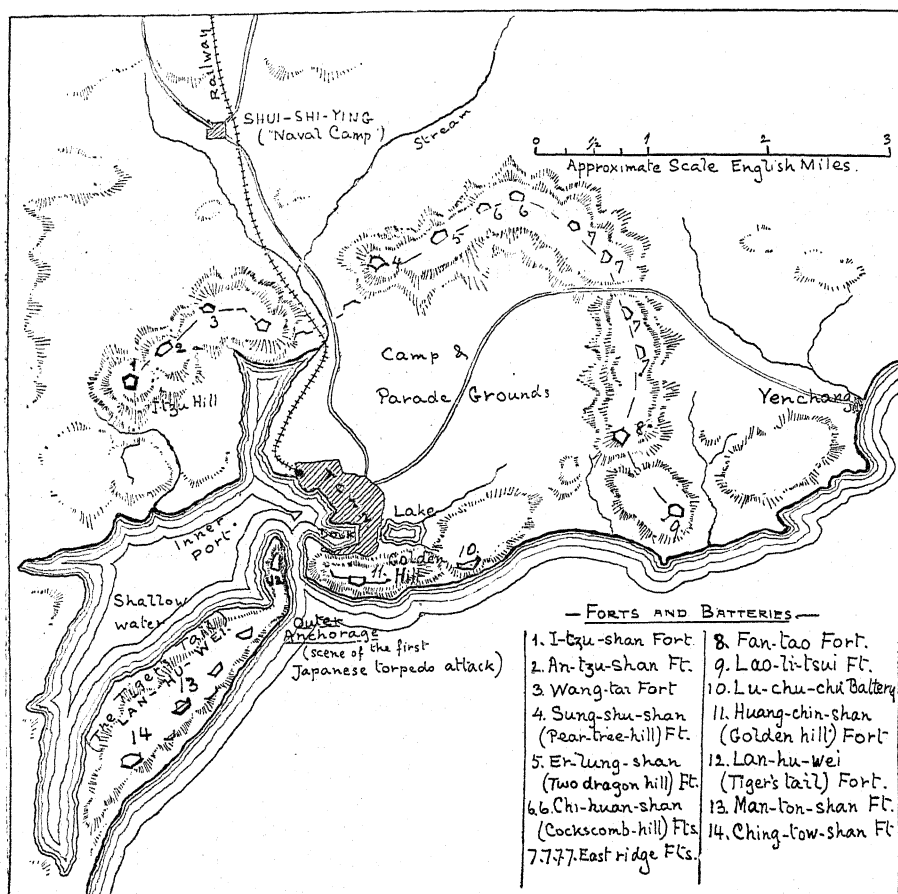
more especially at the thought of having to part shortly with Madame Stoessel, who a little later was reported to have left the place in a destroyer. More recent advices show that the Governor's brave wife scorned to take advantage of the opportunities offered her of escape from the beleaguered fortress, and remained at her husband's side taking a noble share in the work of maintaining a stout resistance to the enemy. Prince Radziwill, a Russian lieutenant, who succeeded in getting away from Port Arthur to Chifu with despatches on September 16th, speaks enthusiastically of this heroic lady's behaviour. "Madame Stoessel," he says, "takes the lead in the Red Cross work, and is in almost constant attendance at the hospital, tenderly caring for the wounded. In the midst of this exhausting work she finds time to aid orphans and widows, and superintend the making of bandages. The soldiers consider her their guardian angel."

During the first fortnight in August the Japanese land operations against Port Arthur chiefly affect the east and west forces of the defensive system. On the east the principal objective is Ta-ku-shan, an eminence which lies a little to the east of the fort marked No. 8 on our plan on the following page; on the west the main effort is made to gain a foothold to the west of Itzu Hill. The latter operation, although stoutly opposed, appears at first to have given less trouble than the former, since landing was easy on the shore of Louisa Bay, the more northerly of the two inlets to the west of the Kwan-tung Promontory; while from Pigeon Bay the Japanese ships could lend occasional valuable assistance to the troops on shore.

The attack on Ta-ku-shan appears to have been a most hotly-contested affair,

the fight lasting for fifteen hours. During the whole of August 8th the Japanese had been exposed to a terrific fire from the forts on the east front, and must have suffered greatly. On August 9th, however, they succeeded in occupying

successful, and on the night of August 10th, the date of the Fleet action, the Japanese, during a heavy rainstorm, made a determined attack on the east fort, evidently in the hope of rushing forts Nos. 8 and 9. The attack was sup-



THE SIEGE OF PORT ARTHUR.

both Ta-ku-shan and Siao-kou-shan, which lies to the south on the shore of Takhe Bay, and fronts Fort No. 9 on our plan, just as Ta-ku-shan fronts Fort No. 8. The Russians made, on the night of the 9th, a strenuous effort to recover the Ta-ku-shan position, but were not

ported by a demonstration along the whole of investment as far as Wolf's Hill; but the Russian fortifications were too strong, the defenders were too alert, and no impression was made. Some idea of the severity of the fighting may be gained from the fact that the admitted



GENERAL STOESSEL: THE HEROIC DEFENDER  
OF PORT ARTHUR.

losses of the Port Arthur garrison from August 8th to August 10th were 7 officers and 248 men killed, 35 officers and 1,553 men wounded, and 1 officer and 83 men missing. This is a very heavy tale of casualties in a force fighting behind elaborately constructed fortifications, and it must be inferred that the losses suffered by the Japanese were far greater. At the same time the latter have gained a substantial advantage by their sacrifices, as far as those incurred in the capture and retention of Ta-ku-shan and Siao-kou-shan are concerned. For they have secured two new positions for their guns, from which a constant fire can be kept up not only on the forts immediately in front, but also upon those to the north, some of which it should now be possible to harass with reverse fire.

It may be noted that about August 10th the Japanese reserves arrived, thus greatly stiffening the attack. On the night of the 13th a determined effort was made on the left of the Russian defences, the Japanese advancing from Louisa Bay, and at the same time making an attempt to capture certain important positions to the north-east of Ta-ku-shan. Two of the latter were occupied, notably that at Pa-li-chwang, which lies about four miles to the north-east of the town, west of the railway and south of Shui-shi-ying. It would seem that the Russians succeeded in recapturing these positions on their right, but did not re-occupy them, contenting themselves with preventing the Japanese from returning and emplacing siege guns there.

On the Russian left wing the fighting was fast and furious all through the 14th and 15th, the Japanese continuing to lose heavily, more especially through mine explosions, but still pressing onward until they had captured and placed batteries

on several important points dominating the town. The result of this movement, which cannot be said to have terminated much before the 17th, is that the line of investment is now bent round Port Arthur in a pretty complete semi-circle, running from the shores of Pigeon Bay up through the open country to the north of Itzu Hill, past Shui-shi-ying, and thence in a south-easterly curve to Ta-ku-shan and Siao-hou-shan. The only sections of the defensive system now not directly menaced seem to be the forts in the Liao-tie-shan Promontory on the Tiger's Tail, and on Golden Hill. These cannot at present be attacked by land without weakening the remainder of the investment, and they are too strong to render it advisable at this stage to risk valuable ships against them.

On the night of the 15th there is a lull in the firing, and General Stoessel receives word that the Japanese desire to send in a "parlementaire." The latter, in the person of a Japanese field-officer, Major Yamaoka, presents himself at the Russian advanced posts, and, after the usual cautious and courteous preliminaries, is conducted to General Stoessel's presence.

The reception of a parlementaire during an important siege is usually a somewhat theatrical performance. Elaborate formality prevails, for the officer who carries the message from the besiegers has generally been carefully selected for his tact and good manners, while on the side of the besieged there is almost invariably a strong wish to assume an attitude of dignified repose. Above all, it is the custom to make every effort to convince the parlementaire that things are going splendidly within the walls of the beleaguered town, that the besieged rather enjoy the circumstances than otherwise, and that

of food in particular there is an overflowing abundance. These harmless deceptions never convince any practised observer, who quietly disregards them and does his best, without exciting suspicion, to note other points which cannot be so readily concealed. But it is one of the rudimentary principles of the art of war that a parlementaire should be bamboozled, if possible, into reporting that those whom he has visited are in first-rate "fettle," and it is not likely that the Russians departed on this occasion from the time-honoured precedent.

Major Yamaoka comes, it should be mentioned, not in the name of Field-Marshal Oyama, who is now proceeding northwards to direct the operations against Liao-yang, but in the joint names of General Nogi, on whom the control of the land operations against Port Arthur has now devolved, and Admiral Togo. The Major brings two documents. The first is an order recently issued by the Mikado through Field-Marshal Yamagata, directing that facilities should be given to women, priests, merchants, and diplomatic officers of neutral Powers to leave Port Arthur, and that if necessary shelter should be accorded to any refugees at Dalny. The order declares that the Emperor is prompted by a feeling of humanity and a desire to spare non-combatants at Port Arthur from the devastation wrought by fire and sword. The second document is of a more sensational nature. It calls upon the Russian garrison of Port Arthur to surrender, the terms being as follows:—The troops to march out with all the honours of war and with permission to join General Kuropatkin; all civilians to be brought to a place designated by the Russian Admiral; and the Russian ships in the harbour, namely, the *Retvisan*, *Sevastopol*, *Pobieda*,

*Peresviet*, *Pollava*, *Bayan*, and *Pallada*, four gunboats, and twelve or more destroyers, to be handed over to the Japanese.

The terms are such that to a despondent commander they might well have afforded comfort and relief. For not only to march out with all the honours of war, but to be enabled to join the main army in the field, is a concession indeed. But terms of any sort involving the surrender of Port Arthur and the ships in harbour are doubly impossible to the Russian Commandant, even if he had the remotest inclination in that direction. For only recently he has received the Tsar's warm congratulations on the bravery exhibited by the Russian troops at the close of July, the message concluding with an appeal to Heaven to "protect the fortress of Port Arthur from the attacks of the enemy." Surrender after such a veiled mandate would in any case be out of the question.

As a matter of fact, General Stoessel does not need any sort of stimulus to work him up to the rejection of these terms. Except in the matter of addressing fiery orations to the troops, the General is a silent man; but when the terms are submitted to him, his habitual taciturnity deserts him, and he bursts into a storm of invective. Not, it would seem, against Major Yamaoka, whom personally he treats throughout with great courtesy, but against the "cursed spite" which has subjected him to what he regards—somewhat fantastically—as a humiliation. After stamping up and down the room for some time he regains his composure, and turning to the parlementaire, remarks that the action of the Japanese in sending him such a summons is "a joke in bad taste." As for the terms, they are, of course, rejected. Apparently the General also formally

declines to consider the Mikado's suggestive order as to the removal of non-combatants. Major Yamaoka now asks for a three days' truce to bury the dead. Even this is refused. The General will assent to nothing, will do nothing but fight. Accordingly, the Japanese parlementaire withdraws, and in a few hours fighting is resumed with furious vigour on all sides.

The Japanese papers of this date profess unstinted admiration of General Stoessel's determination to defend Port Arthur to the last, but blame him greatly for not acceding to the suggestion as to the removal of non-combatants. There is some doubt on the latter point, and it is expedient that General Stoessel should be given the benefit of it. It is by no

made, it is distinctly stated that, at one period or another of the siege, three hundred women engaged in hospital work at Port Arthur were "advised to leave, but replied that they would rather face massacre than desert their posts."

As regards non-combatants generally, it is not altogether surprising that the Commandant of Port Arthur should not altogether relish the idea of these being afforded shelter at Dalny, where they would inevitably be "pumped" for information as to the resources of the garrison, and might, innocently enough, tell a good deal which it was not altogether desirable the besiegers should know. Humanity is, of course, a primary consideration; but, in such a case as that of Port Arthur, non-combatants must be



*Photo : Nouvelle, Paris.*

STORES OF VODKA AT PORT ARTHUR.

means certain that he did not give the non-combatants in the town the chance of taking advantage of the offer, and, in the account given by Prince Radziwill, from which a quotation has already been

regarded as having remained, if not to serve their own ends, at any rate at their own risk, and a commander would be justified in regarding their safety as not necessarily a more serious responsibility

than his duty towards the combatant garrison.

The foreign Attachés, it should be remarked, were permitted, if not urged, to take their departure about this time,

an hourly risk of exposure to a storm of bullets. The Attachés, it should be mentioned, appear all to have left Port Arthur in junks, one of them escorting three French ladies, who could hardly have left



LIEUT. GENERAL SMIRNOW: IN CHARGE OF THE PORT ARTHUR FORTS.

the General presumably trusting to their honour not to talk too freely about the state of affairs inside the fortress. For some little time past these Attachés had been quartered in the Tiger's Tail battery, 600 feet above the sea level. Shells often burst near them, but apparently without effect. The Attachés were treated with great consideration, but were not allowed to go near any point from which they could view more particularly the naval operations. As to the land fighting, it would have been difficult, seemingly, for anyone not in a balloon to have obtained any coherent idea of this without running

the place unnoticed had General Stoessel been resolved to inhibit all non-combatants other than attachés from escaping.

Between August 18th and 22nd some of the hottest fighting of the whole siege occurred, culminating in a general assault on the latter date, which the Russians succeeded in repelling, though only with great difficulty. The main attack was delivered against the Russian centre and left, but the only real success attained seems to have been the capture of a small work on the east front, called Poyodo Fort, lying between Ta-ku-shan



and the main line of defences. On the Russian left and centre the fighting was terribly severe. Assisted by artillery fire from Shui-shi-ying and Louisa Bay, the Japanese made a series of desperate charges into the open country to the east of Pigeon Bay, driving the Russians back to the main forts. But all about here it is flat, and the *kao-liang* had been cut. Consequently the Japanese failed to hold the positions they had captured, and were swept back repeatedly by the deadly artillery fire from the forts. Time after time the ghastly process was gone through. A grand charge, hand-to-hand bayonet fighting, and then a temporary triumph. Siege-guns would now be dragged up, and frantic efforts made to get them into position. But by this time the Russian forts would be relieved from the risk of firing on their own infantry, and their powerful modern guns would open on the clustering Japanese. A few well-aimed shells, and the ground won at great sacrifice would become quite untenable. Reluctantly the victors in the recent hand-to-hand struggle would retire, paying another heavy toll to the enemy's guns. One important fort on the I-shan Hills, midway between the western sea-coast and the railway, about half-way between Pigeon and Louisa Bays, is said to have been captured and evacuated in this trying fashion. The position was first subjected to a heavy bombardment for forty-eight hours. "The Japanese infantry then advanced, compelling the Russians to retire, but the captors in their turn were driven out by the fierce fire of the Russian batteries."

Although the Japanese assault on this occasion was unquestionably repulsed with serious losses, it is evident that the defence, too, was considerably shaken by

the desperate onslaught, accompanied, as the latter was, by an almost ceaseless bombardment. It is said that during the four days over 5,000 shells, large and small, were fired into the town, the Japanese artillerymen having located the public buildings, and being bent on destroying them. Poor General Stoessel's headquarters seem to have received special attention, for they are described as being "continually shelled." A grimly quaint incident takes place on the 19th in connection with a Chinese theatre in the native town, at which, in sublime Celestial indifference to the surroundings, a performance is proceeding. The latter is rudely interrupted by the arrival of a nine-inch shell, which bursts and kills eighteen of the wretched audience.

The Russian losses during this period must have been very severe, although doubtless not so heavy as those of the Japanese. It is said that the storage buildings along the docks are now being turned into dead-houses, whence the bodies are hurried to pits dug on the outskirts of the town and covered with quick-lime.

"The civilians have grown careless of bursting shells, and are leaving their bomb-proof shelters. During Friday's (August 19th) bombardment they walked freely about the streets, smoking and speculating where the next shell would drop." Thus writes the *Express* correspondent at Chifu, which now seems to be receiving almost daily intelligence from Port Arthur. The Japanese evidently do not trouble to prevent the Chinese from carrying to Chifu and elsewhere a goodly stock of "news," much of which has, however, to be received with caution.

On August 22nd the Japanese fire perceptibly slackened, and the failure of the

Japanese assault not only inspirits the besieged, but creates a very favourable impression in St. Petersburg, where it is now confidently expected that the fall of Port Arthur, believed a few days ago to be imminent, will be indefinitely postponed. General Stoessel, who has been created Aide-de-camp to the Tsar, is now the hero of the hour, and for the twentieth time the despatch of the Baltic Fleet to redress the naval balance in the Far East is enthusiastically mooted.

It is not only in St. Petersburg that the failure of the recent general assault on Port Arthur causes some revulsion of popular feeling. In Europe generally there had been a disposition to believe that, when the time came for the Japanese to deliver a grand attack, that attack would in all probability be successful. The impression created by previous Japanese triumphs certainly favoured the idea that, after such a deliberate and costly preparation, and with such large resources in the way of men and guns at their disposal, the Japanese, carried on as at Nan-shan by desperate valour and almost frantic resolution, would find some means of driving their first real assault home. But it was now evident that the strength of the Port Arthur fortifications and the spirit of the defenders had been underrated. Public opinion underwent a decided reaction, and in many quarters it was freely anticipated that the garrison might still contrive to hold out until help arrived, and that, in any case, the Japanese could not hope to make a successful entry until they had suffered losses still more appalling than those already inflicted upon them by the obstinate defenders.

At Tokio itself the failure of the assault caused much discouragement, and great dissatisfaction was openly expressed with

Field-Marshal Oyama, just as it had been in the case of Admiral Kamimura until the latter won his way back into favour by the sinking of the *Rurik*. This exhibition of feeling may seem trivial, but is a useful reminder of the unquestioned fact that, while the Japanese extort our admiration by their patience in the field, they are not as a nation very good losers, and in this war have become so accustomed to success that they are far too prompt to blame their commanders, naval and military, for failures which cannot in any way fairly be traced to incompetence or lack of energy.

About this time the idea becomes prevalent that, in view of the heavy losses hitherto incurred, the Japanese will abstain from regular assaults on Port Arthur, and will endeavour to starve out the unfortunate garrison. This idea, although erroneous, receives some support from the increased watchfulness of the vessels told off to maintain the blockade, and a growing reluctance to allow Chinese refugees to leave the town. As yet, however, there is no trustworthy talk of scarcity at Port Arthur, and the United States Naval Attaché, who left the fortress in the third week in August, is said to have stated definitely that the place could hold out as regards food for another three months, at any rate. Moreover, where there is any sort of a chance of successful blockade-running it will always be attempted, and cannot be invariably hindered. As far, then, as this intermediate stage is concerned, we need not trouble ourselves to formulate the prospect of the reduction of Port Arthur by the grim process of waiting until the food supplies give out. More inspiring is the circumstance that, although the Japanese hopes as regards the efficacy of general assaults may have been somewhat

dashed, they continue to hammer away at the tremendous obstacles before them with little or no diminution of fighting energy.

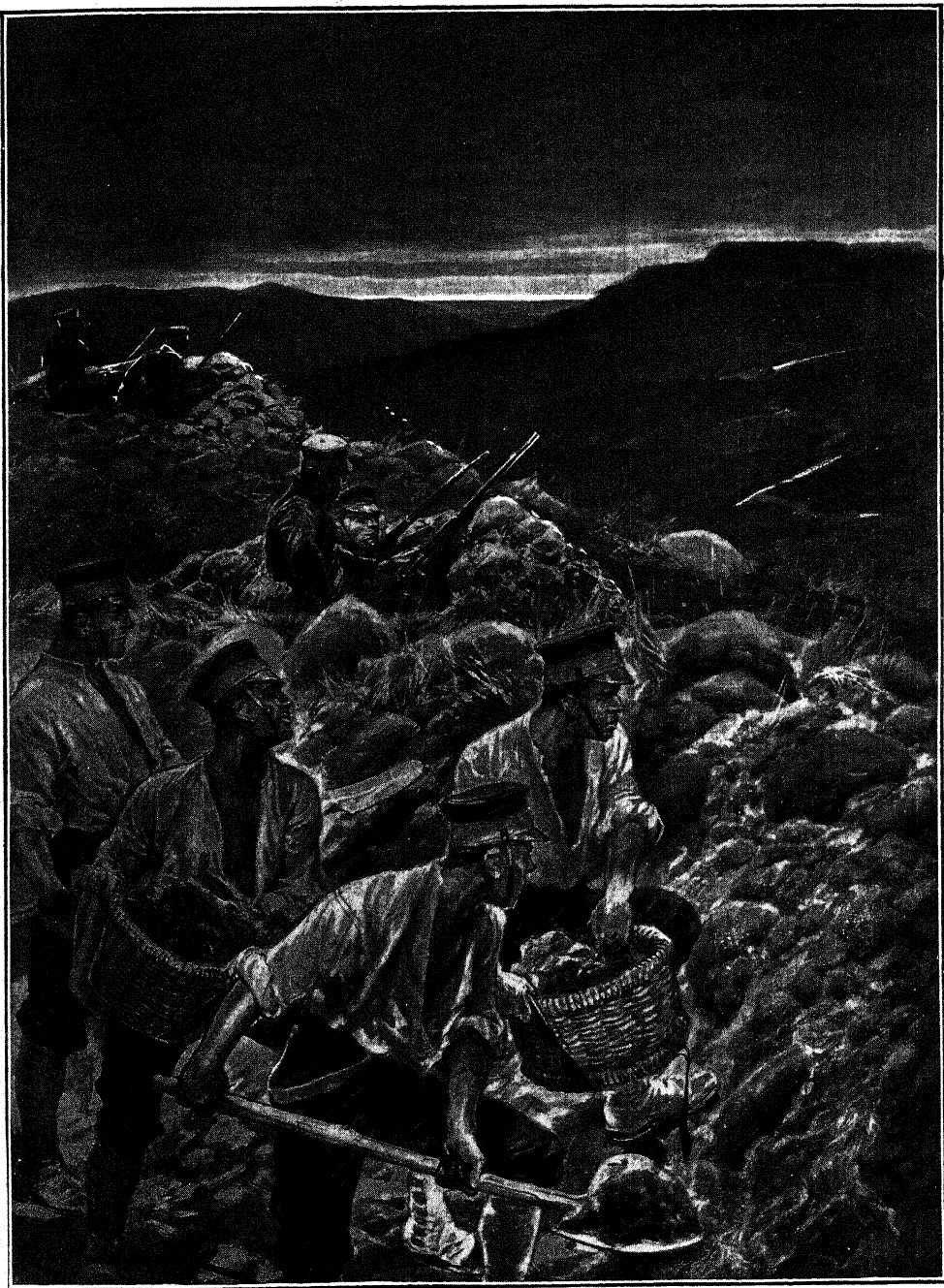
During and after the general assault of August 18th to 22nd there is some indication of an attempt on both sides to introduce once more the naval element. On August 20th a Japanese torpedo flotilla tries to steal into the harbour in the hope of damaging some of the ships at anchor, but is surprised by the shore batteries, and returns unsuccessful. In the forenoon of August 23rd the great Japanese armoured cruisers *Nisshin* and *Kasuga* steam in close to the Lao-li-tsui Forts (No. 9 on our plan) and silence them. On the same day the Russian battleship *Sevastopol* also takes a hand in the operations, and bombards the Japanese line of investment from the roadstead. But while engaged in this occupation the unfortunate vessel strikes a mine, and is seen by a Japanese destroyer to list badly to starboard with her bows submerged. She is afterwards towed into harbour. The following day a Russian destroyer strikes a mine and sinks off the harbour entrance. Meanwhile the ships in harbour are going through troublous times. They are scattered about in the hope of escaping the rain of shells, but it is said that the *Retvisan*, *Bayan*, and *Potava* have been badly hit, the damage to the first being below the water-line.

After the general assault of August 18th to 22nd there was a slight lull; but on the night of August 23rd, at eleven o'clock, the Japanese moved up a considerable force for an attack on Zaredoutni Fort, a strong position on the Russian right flank. According to the *Novy Krai*, the well-known Port Arthur newspaper, "the Japanese made clever use of the available cover, and by mid-

night they formed up within striking distance of the fortifications. They made a powerful rush forward, but were mowed down on all but one side, where a detachment succeeded in entering the port over the dead bodies of their comrades. Nearly all of them were bayoneted, and the remnant retreated, suffering severe losses. The Japanese were soon reinforced, and again furiously attacked the fort, only to be once more repulsed, and a third attempt was also unsuccessful. At daylight there was an artillery duel. The fort suffered considerably, and the garrison was ordered into the undamaged trenches."

Let us endeavour briefly to realise this scene, which is probably typical of many of the desperate attacks made by the Japanese in the course of the siege on individual positions. The fort in question is a comparatively small one, but it is evidently strong, and very possibly, as is often the case with Russian defences, rather over- than under-manned. In the darkness we may not be able to make out much more than a single face of the work, but even a glimpse will show how thoroughly the Russian engineers understand their business, and what determination and sacrifice are necessary to effect an entry into such a stronghold. Most of the forts round Port Arthur have their parapets fronted by very deep ditches which, again, have at intervals what are known as *kaponiers*, or bomb-proof structures containing quick-firing guns so arranged as to sweep the ditch from end to end. Beyond the ditch there may be, and in this case doubtless are, wire entanglements with a view to breaking a sudden rush, and in the ditch itself there may be other obstacles in the way of spikes or branches of trees.

The fort may or may not be provided



THE MOLE IN THE NIGHT: THE STEALTHY JAPANESE THROWING UP  
EARTHWORKS BEFORE PORT ARTHUR.

with a search-light. The chances are that it is; but it does not follow that this appliance is very freely used, for many engineers consider it to be rather like a two-edged tool, which is a little apt to hurt the unskilful user. A search-light shows up an attack very clearly, but it also gives the latter the right direction from the first, and, though the sensation of advancing to an assault with the search-light playing on them may be anything but pleasant, many soldiers will go forward more readily in such conditions than in complete darkness.

It is evident that, search-light or no search-light, the attacking party which is creeping up for a rush has a trying experience before it. After collecting in sufficient strength within striking distance, the signal for the advance is given, and the devoted band goes forward with bayonets fixed and probably with wire-cutters in readiness. They cannot hope to reach the ditch before the alarm is given, and parapets in front—in this case, perhaps, three faces of a pentagonal redoubt are being simultaneously assaulted—are bristling with the defenders' rifles. Flashes break out continuously along the lines of breastwork, the search-light, if there is one, begins to traverse the front of the fort, machine-guns come into action, and scores of fine fellows throw up their arms and fell back, or stumble limply forward, never to rise again. Arrived at the ditch, an attempt may be made to use scaling ladders either as ladders or bridges, but most of the Port Arthur forts are built to frustrate escape. There remains the heroic process of jumping into the ditch and climbing up the opposing slope—the escarp, it is called—which is made as steep as possible in order to render the ascent more difficult. At this stage the quick-firers

in the kaponiers come into play, and the ditch is soon heaped high with corpses. Pouring over the dead bodies of their comrades come fresh hordes of attackers, and, clambering up the escarps and the exterior slopes of the parapet, they not unfrequently meet the defenders hand-to-hand on the top or "superior slope" of the parapet itself. Here it is all bayonet work of the most desperate character. The Japanese might be thought to be at a disadvantage in the matter of bayonet fighting as compared with their big adversaries; but they are, of course, extremely active, and, moreover, are specially trained to stoop and deliver an upward thrust with the bayonet so as to get under a tall man's guard.

We may take it, then, that not through any inequality in this respect do the Japanese fail in the attack on Zaredoutni Fort. It is simply because the loss incurred in getting a foothold has been so terrific that the foothold cannot possibly be retained. Three times, we are told, is the attack renewed, and we may be sure that each time the Japanese fought with almost demoniacal fury. But the odds, natural and artificial, against them are too great, and gradually they are beaten back, leaving hundreds, maybe, of their gallant fellows dead or dying in and around that dreadful pentagon.

Between August 23rd and 27th we do not hear of any but incidental fighting. In the interval the Japanese are busy preparing for another general assault. Special attention is paid to the left of the Russian line of defence, doubtless with a view to future operations in the Liau-ti-shan Promontory. A large park of artillery is formed at Louisa Bay, and on the shores of Pigeon Bay a considerable fort is said to be in course of construction.

Between August 27th and 31st there is

more heavy fighting, the Japanese opening the ball by an attack delivered at 3 a.m. during a storm, upon the positions on the Russian left flank. Later the attack seems to have developed all along the line, but was only successful in the case of the position of Pa-li-chwang, which has already been mentioned as lying about four miles to the north-east of the town. This time the Japanese not only capture, but retain the position, on which they proceed to mount heavy guns. On the evening of the 29th, about nine o'clock, there is a brisk little engagement near Shui-shi-ying, where the Japanese have ingeniously unroofed some strong Chinese houses made of mud, and converted them into redoubts. A Russian regiment makes a sudden onslaught on one of these improvised forts, and forces the Japanese back at the point of the bayonet to a second "redoubt." The fire from the latter is, however, too fierce for the Russians, and they retire. The incident seems trivial, but is interesting as an instance of the numerous counter-strokes made by the Russians during the siege. Such performances reflect great credit on the defenders, and, moreover, serve to emphasise the extraordinary difficulties which the besiegers have to encounter. For it argues a notable quality of resistance that, towards the close of what may, perhaps, be fairly described as the second general attack on Port Arthur, in the course of which the fortifications have been repeatedly shaken by a fearful cannonade, the defenders should have the "grit and go" necessary to emerge and engage hand-to-hand with the attacking infantry in their trenches.

On August 30th, at three o'clock in the morning, the Japanese moving out from their new position at Pa-li-chwang deliberately assaulted Sun-shu-shan (Pear

Tree Hill) and Er-lung-shan (Two Dragon Hill) Forts (Nos. 4 and 5 on the plan), making repeated attacks until two o'clock in the afternoon, when, according to Reuter's correspondent at Chifu, they were compelled to fall back, having lost over a thousand men. "Finding these forts impregnable, the next morning, at four o'clock, the Japanese forces hurled themselves against another fort near Er-lung-shan, and after a hand-to-hand fight succeeded in driving out the Russians occupying the position. Artillery was brought up, and desperate efforts were made to render the position secure; but after enduring for seven hours the artillery fire of the other forts, the Japanese were compelled to retire. They succeeded, however, in making the position useless to the Russians, and it is now (September 3rd) unoccupied."

Here is an example of the application of the principle of reciprocal defence to fortification, by which we have to understand that, in a big scheme of defence, the forts are commonly arranged so that if one is captured it can be immediately swept by artillery fire from one or more other forts. It is this circumstance which often deprives a splendidly successful assault of any practical result, and, incidentally, it is for this reason that general assaults are sometimes delivered in cases in which anything like general success is quite hopeless. Probably in the latter suggestion lies the secret of the retention of the position at Pa-li-chwang. The fort or forts from which it could have been harassed after its occupation by the Japanese were doubtless kept busy until, with sandbags and by rapid trenching, sufficient protection was afforded for guns and men to enable both to remain in the new position.

During the first fortnight of September

the fighting is continuous, the Japanese here and there scoring a slight success, but not appreciably advancing the line of investment. On the 2nd and 3rd the Japanese bombardment was very heavy, and a couple of guns in a fort near Erlung-shan are said to have been dismounted. On September 4th the Russians retorted by shelling the covered Japanese trenches in front of Pa-li-chwang and destroying them.

The *Novy Krai* mentions a typical case of heroic self-sacrifice on the part of a Japanese on September 5th. The man calmly left a redoubt occupied by his comrades, and deliberately marched towards the Russians, carrying two boxes, and thinking, perhaps, that the Russians out of curiosity would allow him to come among them before shooting him down. As it was, he was not picked off by the sharpshooters until he had approached quite near. When the body was examined it was found that the boxes contained lyddite, and that fuses were carefully attached to them.

Between September 8th and 10th the Japanese capture a fort situated on a high hill two miles east of Golden Hill. The position is taken by assault, but we are told that the fighting is not severe, and that the Japanese are enabled to remain in the fort on account of the poor powder which is now being used by the Russians at Golden Hill. Small as the distance is, many of the Russian shells fall short, and others fail to explode. A month ago the batteries on Golden Hill used to respond briskly to the firing from Shui-shi-ying, but now this is quite out of the question. The shortage of ammunition is evidently a fact, judging from the triumphant satisfaction displayed about this time at the discovery of a secret depôt established by the

Chinese before the war with Japan, in which some three hundred Krupp guns and a quantity of ammunition had been stored. It is reported a little later that many of the projectiles falling into the Japanese lines are Chinese shells which have been filed down to fit the Russian guns in position.

Several interesting accounts of life inside and outside Port Arthur at this period are available. Writing on August 30th, a young Dane, in a private letter which finds its way to Copenhagen, says that General Stoessel "has asked all the inhabitants for their own sakes to take at least six hours' rest *per diem*, though he never seems to sleep himself. He is always bright and cheery. . . . The Japanese are wonderfully plucky fighters—they stand the heaviest fire quite coolly—young boys, too, of seventeen or eighteen years of age. The explosions of mines, for which we use Whitehead torpedoes, are truly awful to see, dismembered bodies flying all round. Thousands of mines have been laid. How will the Japanese fare when they get nearer?"

Prince Radziwill, who, as noted above, left Port Arthur on September 15th, gives a terrible account of the intensity of the fighting. During a recent assault "the Japanese had charged madly in deep columns, losing heavily from the Russian shell-fire. There were horrible scenes when they reached the Russian lines. No quarter was given, and couples were found locked in a death embrace, the teeth of one in the other's throat, and fingers plunged into the enemy's eyes. The 9th Japanese Division had charged in double columns. The first having fallen back under the avalanche of shot and shell, the general in command of the second fired upon it, exterminating it!"

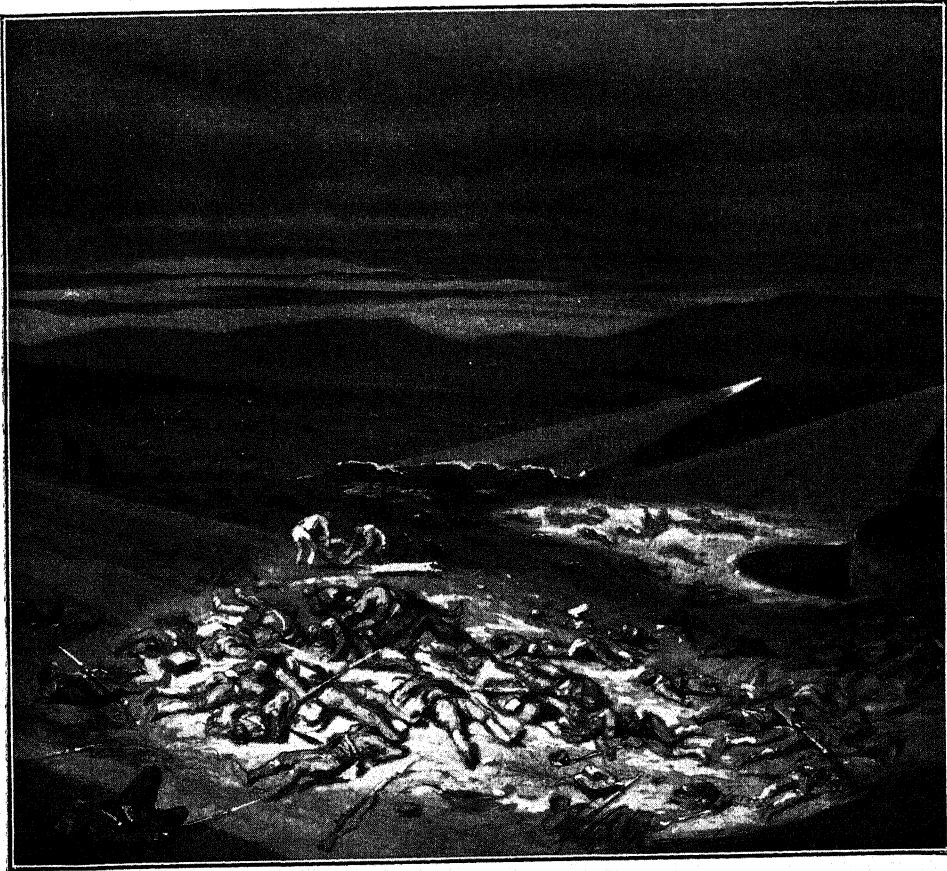
There were, however, moments when



good humour took the place of savage rage. On a rainy day one of a number of Japanese massed beneath a height crowned by a fort cried out to the Russians, "I say, you fellows up there, come

an end to his resistance. Before his sword broke he put eight Japanese *hors de combat*, meanwhile receiving wounds all over his body.

Another inspiring story is told of a



AFTER THE ASSAULT.

*The Japanese succouring their wounded by searchlight after an attack upon the batteries before Port Arthur.*

down and take our place; it's your turn to get wet through!"

Individual acts of heroism were numerous, a particular case cited being that of Lieutenant Petroff, who was surrounded by Japanese and fought successfully until his sword was broken. He then used his fists; but Japanese bayonets quickly put

company which occupied a perilous outpost, and, finding the position untenable, sent word to General Stoessel, "We are unable to hold the position." "But you can die," the General replied. And so they died.

Mme. Anna Kravchenko, an English-woman married to a Russian officer, who

escaped from Port Arthur at the same time as Prince Radziwill, speaks highly of the spirit displayed by the garrison: "I cannot imagine a braver or finer set of men. They come from three days' duty in the trenches singing and laughing, though there are many vacant places in the ranks. They have all unlimited confidence in their power to hold the fortress."

A very trying feature of the siege is the number of dead bodies which are lying unburied round the town, poisoning the air. The stench from these is so awful that the Russian soldiers have to stuff camphor up their nostrils in order to avoid being overcome.

The Japanese are, of course, free from many of the disabilities which oppress the besieged, but are not without their trials and privations. The supply system is said to be working satisfactorily, but there is a scarcity of good drinking water and, apparently, some sickness in consequence. But the Japanese are at a great advantage by reason of their occupation of Dalny, which they are turning to the best possible account. They have recently repaired the Russian dry dock, having discovered the dock gates, which the Russians had sunk on abandoning the port. A steamer, sunk by the Russians at the entrance to the dock, and a number of launches sunk near the pier, have also been raised and taken into use. The workshops at Dalny are now busy in constructing and sending forward heavy gun-shields which are to be used in the case of future captures of forts as a protection against the fire of other forts.

Great preparations are being made for the next big assault, which, it is understood, will be delivered against Er-lung-shan and Chi-huan-shan (Cockscomb Hill)

Forts (Nos. 5 and 6 on the plan). The preliminary work is being carried out chiefly at Pa-li-chwang. "The hills crowned by Chi-huan-shan and Er-lung-shan have," says Reuter's correspondent at Chifu, "regular stopping places, enabling a large force of Japanese to rest securely some distance up the slope. The force has tents pitched, and the troops are relieved every three days. Food, ammunition, etc., are brought up to the troops under cover of darkness, as detachments have to cross a level stretch before reaching safety. Trenches almost under the Russian noses are partially constructed. The Russians constantly endeavour to level the incline by shelling all projections affording any shelter to the attackers. The Japanese artillery engages the Russian guns to prevent the cover from being destroyed.

"Two full divisions of infantry are available in this vicinity under Generals Oshima and Tuchiya. The entire force surrounding Port Arthur numbers 80,000 fighting men."

The above preparations are said to have been completed on September 15th, and at dawn on that day the Japanese bombardment from Shui-shi-ying, Pa-li-chwang, and Pigeon Bay is redoubled in intensity. There must have been other serious fighting on the 15th, as General Stoessel, in a telegram to the General Staff at St. Petersburg, says that 45 Russian guns were destroyed, and that there were 400 killed and 800 wounded, of whom 5 per cent. were officers.

In a future chapter the story of the siege of Port Arthur will be resumed at this point, at which the termination of our "intermediate stage" seems clearly indicated.

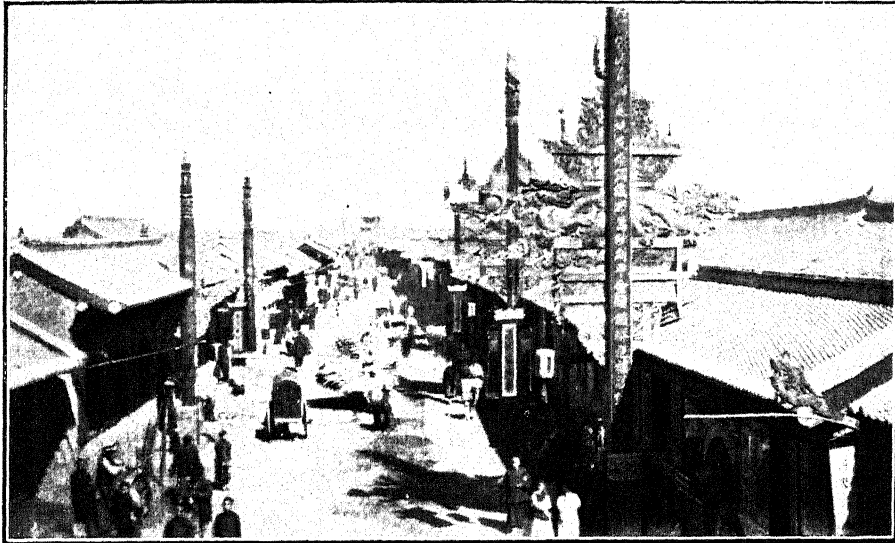


Photo : Urban, Ltd.

NATIVE QUARTER IN LIAO-YANG.

## CHAPTER LIX.

LIAO-YANG AND AFTER—RUSSIAN AND JAPANESE VIEWS—IMPERIAL MESSAGES—THE ARMIES IN THE FIELD—TYPICAL SOLDIERS' LETTERS—JAPAN AND THE WAR CORRESPONDENTS—EUROPEAN OPINIONS.

**A**LTHOUGH three chapters of considerable length have been devoted to the Battle of Liao-yang, there remains a host of important and interesting considerations demanding close attention from those who are real students of this historic event. In a narrative like the present it is not necessary to discuss such sequels and side issues at all exhaustively. But it will be convenient, before leaving the Liao-yang operations and pushing on to the equally, if not more momentous movements which followed them, to touch lightly on the immediate consequence of the battle, and to glance at certain military, sentimental, and international questions arising from it.

First, let us look at what has happened

from the standpoint of the nation whose army has been victorious in this long series of engagements. Public opinion in such matters is not always a very sure guide, and the fact that the capture of Liao-yang was celebrated by copious "mafficking" in Tokio cannot be taken as the measure of the national sentiment on the subject. As usual, the Tokio populace was a little "previous" in its rejoicing, and as early as the evening of September 2nd an immense torchlight procession took place, in which, according to the *Express* correspondent, students, business men, girls, and women participated. "The marchers carried fanciful paper lanterns, tin trumpets, and illuminated banners, which rudely

pictured the flight of Kuropatkin. The bands played the Japanese national anthem over and over again. The procession passed through the principal streets, and at a late hour was massed around the brilliantly lit headquarters of the Army Staff, where a further report from Marshal Oyama was impatiently awaited." To some extent, as we know, the result justified an expression of public satisfaction, and doubtless the temptation to use up the paper lanterns prepared in anticipation of the fall of Port Arthur was great. But the occasion was hardly one for such an extravagant departure from the studied moderation with which the Japanese have hitherto received the news of their successes in the field or at sea.

A higher note was struck a few days later by a long message of congratulation from the Mikado to his gallant troops. In this communication the Emperor shows that he is under no illusions as to the indecisiveness of the recent victory. In particular he alludes to the end of the war as being still far distant; and we may take it that the publication of this important and well-considered message acted as a very useful corrective to the premature and exuberant enthusiasm of the Tokio "maffickers."

To the Japanese in the field the victory, such as it was, at Liao-yang did not bring by any means complete satisfaction. They are said by Reuter's correspondent to have been greatly disappointed at the failure of their plan to bring about a final and decisive battle at Liao-yang, resulting in the annihilation of the present Russian army in Manchuria. In any case, they could not have failed to recognise the fact that never before—except, of course, at Port Arthur—have they met with such dogged resistance, coupled

with a tactical ability which must have extorted their complete respect. Accustomed hitherto to see their schemes of envelopment resulting, if not in enclosure of the enemy, at any rate in his early evacuation of his positions, they have been somewhat rudely awakened at Liao-yang to the occasional risks attendant upon such movements. They have captured Liao-yang itself, it is true, but they have only done so at a very heavy price, and there were times in the course of Kuroki's flanking movement at which the position of the Right Army must have been distinctly precarious. Such reflections must have been grave ones, indeed, for the more thoughtful Japanese officers in the field, who, more clearly than the General Staff at Tokio, were able to appreciate the quality of the Russian resistance on the Shu-shan hills, and the unpleasant surprise caused on the other side of the Tai-tse-ho by finding Kuropatkin's main army in position instead of a weak, unprotected line of communications.

It is the more creditable to the Army of Japan that it should have realised as promptly as it did the imperative necessity of not allowing the grass to grow under its feet after the occupation of the former Russian military capital of Manchuria. One does not allude so much to the pressure still exercised upon the Russian Army which, after September 4th, retired on Mukden and Tie-ling, as to the vigorous efforts made in connection with Liao-yang and the lines of communication. There is no question that much of the Japanese success in the subsequent operations was due to the extraordinary industry and energy which the new occupiers of Liao-yang infused into the business of making the most of their important acquisition. The town had hardly



**"MISSING": JAPANESE DEAD AND WOUNDED IN A FIELD OF MILLET.**

*The millet fields of Manchuria have both aided and handicapped the Japanese in their struggle with Kuroputkin. The crops have served to mask the movements of their troops, but they have also made the work of the parties searching for dead and wounded exceptionally difficult.*



been entered when Marshal Oyama made it his headquarters, and in less than a week the old Russian settlement was beginning to wear the appearance of a modern Japanese town. Meanwhile the occupation of Niu-chwang was also being justified in a remarkable manner. Reinforcements and supplies were being pushed up thence to the north by every conceivable means, the estuary and tributaries of the Liao River being crowded with boats, while along every road and bypath leading to Liao-yang there were strings of hand-carts bearing grain and ammunition.

Nothing is more remarkable in the conduct of warlike operations by the Japanese than their seizure of every opportunity of this sort to push up supplies to the front in order that the soldier in the ranks may be made as comfortable as means will permit. In too many European armies the tendency is to make constant overdrafts on the energy and endurance of the soldier without making really adequate efforts to refund him, so to speak, the moment there is a chance of doing so. The consequence is that he is sometimes suffering hardships and privations even in the hour of victory, not because there are not abundant supplies in rear, but because no proper arrangements have been made to bring them up promptly as soon as ever the hostile pressure in front has ceased. That is evidently not the Japanese idea. With this level-headed army the central notion seems to be that the maintenance of the soldier at the highest point of efficiency throughout a campaign depends largely on the care which is taken of him. He is expected at times to do extraordinary things on a few grains of dry rice, but he is made to feel that at the very earliest possible instant he will again be properly

fed, and even have his small luxuries in the way of cigarettes and so forth. The hurling back of the enemy will thus mean not only "Long life to Japan!" but will be followed by an almost immediate improvement in the present hard conditions of existence. However glorious a soldier's spirit may be, he is seldom blind to the comfortable prospect of a "square meal," and we may be quite sure that none of Oyama's men was altogether indifferent to the spectacle of supplies pouring into Liao-yang the moment it was ascertained that Kuropatkin was in retreat.

It will be very interesting if ever we can get at the back of the minds of the Japanese soldiery at this period. But necessarily a long interval must elapse before even officers, not to speak of fighting men in the ranks, will be allowed to talk or write freely of a great battle in which Japanese losses were so appalling. We have it on Field-Marshal Oyama's authority that the spirits of the troops after the battle were high in spite of the ten days' continuous fighting in which they had been engaged, and the hammering they had received. This is hardly to be wondered at when the glowing patriotism which inspires the humblest Japanese conscript is taken into consideration. In which connection it may be interesting if we here interpolate a genuine Japanese soldier's letter which, if it does not describe any fighting, is at least a useful indication of the sort of fervour with which Oku's glorious infantry dashed themselves against the Russian positions at Liao-yang in a series of frontal attacks unsurpassed for burning courage and grim tenacity. The correspondent who sent the letter from Japan—it was printed in the *Times* shortly after the battle of Liao-yang—mentions that it was written



by a former servant in an English resident's family to a fellow-servant. "One thing, you may be certain," says the English correspondent, "the writer means every word he says; and, mind you, this is no descendant of Samurais, but a humble fellow from the country, who will willingly die if he can but strike one blow for his Emperor and his native land. What will stop a nation of such men?"

The letter translated runs as follows:—

"Hokkaido, August 5th, 1904.

"Since the war began we have been for months impatiently longing for orders to mobilise; this very day, the 5th, the order has been given to our division, and fortunately I have been selected for one of the field infantry companies, and have to be ready in twelve days, and we are leaving our native country for the front to fight with the enemies of right. Fortunately, ever since the first fights on sea and land, our officers and comrades have been gaining victories by the assistance of Heaven and the virtue of our Emperor; and I, too, though merely a humble fellow from the country, have the chance to strike one blow at the Russians. The Russo-Japan War is quite different from the China-Japan War, and we pray that now by our efforts we may spread the glory of our empire throughout the world. We are going into the battlefield, and we do not know whether we shall come back; but it is a great thing to be able to sacrifice our lives for the Emperor and our beloved country. I am in a hurry to prepare for the front, hereby I write to say good-bye to you and the rest of the household, and also to inform you of my good luck while yet I am alive.

"YASUMITSU MUKAI,

"26th Regiment Infantry,

"Asahigawa, Hokkaido."

Turning our attention now to the Russian standpoint we find here again, strange to say, a tendency to premature rejoicing over the earlier stages of the Liao-yang battle. The preliminary repulse of the armies of Oku and Nozu by the force entrenched on the Shu-shan seems to have been altogether overrated even by the Russian military authorities at the front, and on August 31st, the Russian *Official Messenger* announced that a great Russian victory had been gained! It is needless to dwell on the manner in which this illusion was painfully dispelled, more especially since, to the thinking Russian public, it soon became evident that even if a victory had not been secured, and something in the nature of a sharp defeat had been sustained, at least a great disaster had been averted. Bitter as was the disappointment at finding that once more the detested Yaponskis had scored a triumph, it was a great consolation to feel that the bulk of the Russian army in the field was still in being, and that the retirement from Liao-yang had been conducted in a manner by no means discreditable to the reputation and traditions of the Russian Army.

For some days no attempt was officially made to put the Russian public in possession of the facts; but about September 14th General Kuropatkin's admirable despatch, dated the 11th, and giving an account, simple and unvarnished, of the operations from August 26th to September 7th, was officially reproduced, and created a very good impression. In the circumstances it is not surprising that a good deal of obloquy should have been showered upon the unfortunate General Orloff, whose failure either to secure, or to create a useful diversion from, his position near Yen-tai was such a melancholy feature of the Russian movements in the



Third Phase of the battle. For the rest, the Russian public was evidently still prepared to regard Kuropatkin as a great commander, who had done his best in very difficult circumstances, and every effort was made in the Press and elsewhere to discount the importance of the loss of Liao-yang.

The Tsar was not behindhand in assisting to make the best of a doubtful business. On receipt of General Kuropatkin's despatch he forwarded to him the following message:—

"I see from your report that you were unable to hold the fortress of Liao-yang owing to the enemy threatening to cut off your communications.

"The retreat of the whole army in such difficult circumstances and over the terrible roads was an operation excellently carried out in face of grave difficulties.

"I thank you and your splendid troops for their heroic work and their continued self-sacrifice. God guard you.—  
NICHOLAS."

This gracious message General Kuropatkin caused to be read before the troops of all detachments of the field army with solemn ceremony. In commenting on it in a General Order he remarked that it contained a further expression of lofty benevolence on the part of the Tsar—presumably with reference to the part played by the Commander-in-Chief himself—and added: "I am quite sure that in the work that lies before the Manchurian Army every soldier will put forth his best efforts to achieve victory over the enemy, and to become worthy of the confidence of the Emperor of Russia."

To his Imperial Master General Kuropatkin telegraphed that the entire Manchurian Army rejoiced inexpressibly at his Majesty's appreciation of its labours and its military deeds. "We are all

animated," he declared, "by the one desire to beat the enemy and to justify the confidence placed in us by the supreme chief of the Russian Army, who may feel perfectly sure in regard to the troops' future self-denial and devotion." With somewhat remarkable insistence the General goes on, or is made by his St. Petersburg editors to go on, to repeat that the departure from Liao-yang, in the conditions in which it was accomplished, was an absolutely indispensable though most difficult undertaking. Attention was further drawn to the fact that the enemy has laid no claim to captures of prisoners, guns, or other trophies. Finally, it is pointed out that General Kuroki's report confirms the statement that on the morning of September 4th the Russian Army might have been cut into two if steps had not been taken to prevent that catastrophe.

While these amenities are being exchanged between St. Petersburg and Mukden on the subject of the recent great battle, there is reason to believe that there is still some want of harmony at the front, and that the leadership of the Russian generals is being subjected on the spot to a good deal of acrimonious criticism. "Everywhere," telegraphs a French correspondent, "I hear complaints and recriminations against officers of high rank." He adds his own conviction that "with certain rare exceptions, such as the late Count Keller and General Bilderling, the Manchurian Army has suffered greatly from the lack of competent officers. As far as personal courage went they seem to have behaved admirably; but individual heroism, when not backed up by qualities of leadership, initiative, and resource, is of little use to a commander called upon to handle troops against such enemies as the Japanese.

### THE SHEEP-LIKE RUSSIAN SOLDIER.

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Incompetence on the part of junior Russian officers was the more deplorable because, as has been hinted before in this narrative, the Russian soldier is not trained to act on his own responsibility.

fied. Contrast this with what the famous Russian war correspondent, M. Nemirovitch Dantchenko, tells us about the brave but, in this respect, rather sheep-like Russian soldier. "There have been



Photo: "Collier's Weekly."

GENERAL KUROPATKIN AWARDING THE CROSS OF ST. GEORGE ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

We saw in the course of the battle of Liao-yang how, during one stage of the fighting, Japanese "first-class privates" had to take command of companies, all the company officers having been killed; and it is evident from the result that the sudden promotion was abundantly justi-

cases," he says with mistaken pride, "when all the officers being killed, the troops appealed to the officers of the Red Cross detachments to take the command, because they would be left alone without permission to attack the enemy." From the standpoint of practical warfare there

is nothing whatever to admire in this Casabianca-like attitude, which undoubtedly goes far to explain the Russian failure in such a hurly-burly of fighting as the battle of Liao-yang became at several stages in its progress.

But it is not easy to find further fault with the gallant, good-hearted, simple-minded Russian fighting-man. A little while back we quoted a letter from a Japanese conscript who had just been ordered to join his regiment. Here are a few extracts from a Russian soldier's letter which was published by a Moscow paper, and was translated and reproduced in the Moscow correspondence of the *Standard*. The letter begins:—

"You wanted me to write you, brother, all about the service. Well, here you are——" And the writer goes on to detail his experiences, commencing with the attack on Port Arthur on February 8th, which, using the Old style of the Russian calendar, he makes January 27th. From Port Arthur his regiment, the 10th, was transferred to the Yalu, and hence we may follow his letter *verbatim*, again reminding readers that the difference of thirteen days between the Old and New styles must be allowed for:—

"On March 29th, the second day of Easter, thirty of our scouts, with three officers, went across the River Yalu to make a reconnaissance, and had a turn-up with the Japanese—five killed and twenty-three wounded we had. This was our first baptism of fire, and from that day forward we had skirmishes every day. On April 16th, 17th, and 18th was the big battle at Turen-chen, lasting from five in the morning till one o'clock in the day. We got the orders to retire to the rear, and very sorry we were to have to abandon our killed and wounded, but we couldn't possibly take them up.

Our losses were 800 men. So we retired back 150 versts (100 miles), carrying wounded men on our backs. Here we stopped till May 17th, and they changed our commanding officer. In place of Sassulitch came Lieut.-General Count Keller, and with him we advanced again. He had not gone above seventy versts when we came upon the Japanese, and there was a fight. We retired on our positions, where we remained till June 12th. On that day the Japanese began to attack our position, about a division strong, and in the position there was only our one regiment. In the night we retired to the rear, fifty versts. In the night of June 20th we went for the Japanese, cut off two of his pickets, and rushed at them with the bayonet. This was a night fight. But, as always, the Japanese sent against us a countless host, and we retired to our detachment with a loss of 250 men killed and wounded.

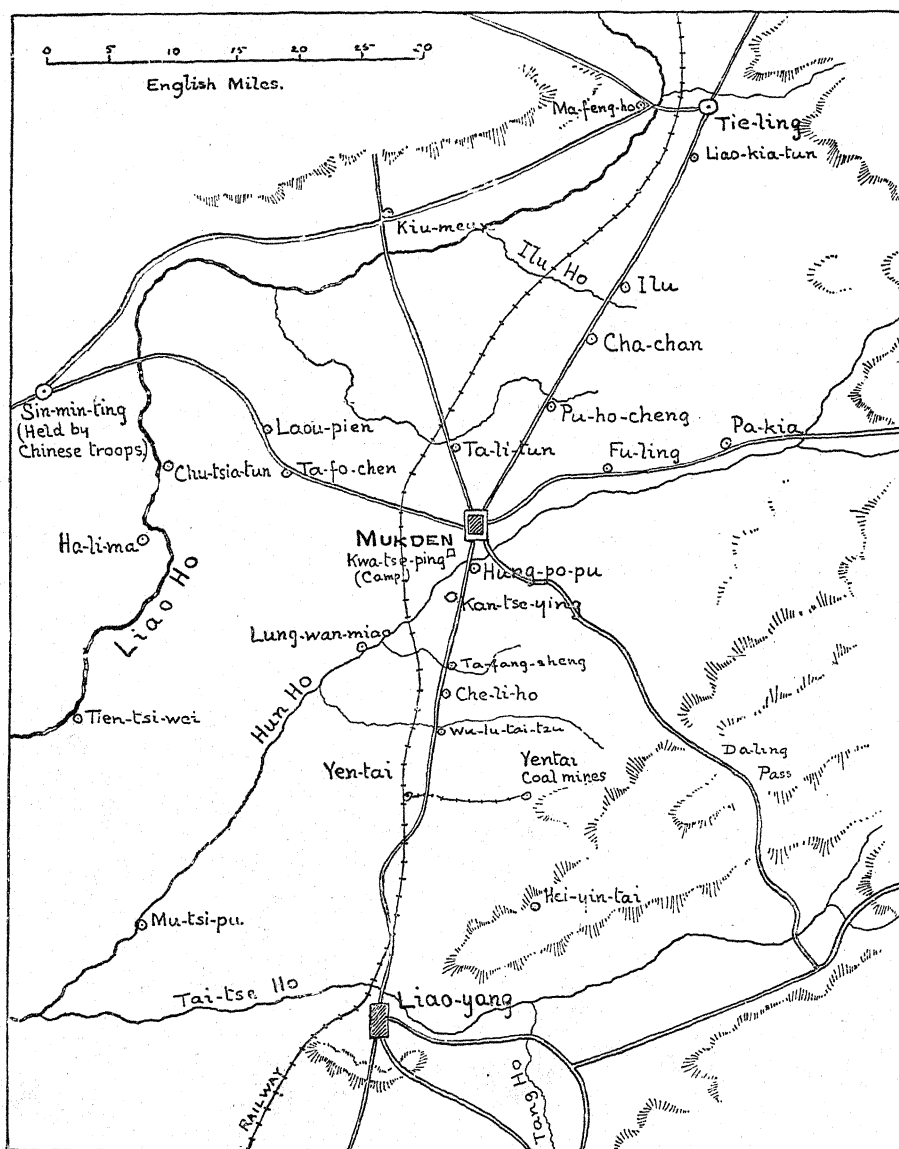
"On July 3rd there was a night affair. We marched out at two o'clock in the night, but the Japanese spied us and retired. On July 4th at dawn the whole of our regiment was sent into the firing line, and there was a fight lasting from five in the morning till three in the afternoon. It was a hot business, and we lost about a thousand men. We did not want to retire, but they gave us orders to go. On July 18th there was a still more terrible fight, when the Japanese killed our hero, Count Keller, with a shell. All our fellows are very sorry to lose our glorious brave leader. God gave him a good death from shell; he was hit in the head, and did not live more than twenty minutes after. After this fight we retired on Liao-yang, and are now posted fifteen versts (ten miles) from it. Here we got a new chief, Lieut.-General Ivanov. They say there will soon be a

general engagement. Is it possible we shall retire again? Of our regiment there is not much left after all our losses, some killed, some badly wounded and died. Myself, I have not been wounded once, although I have been under the fire of the Japanese in all our fights. I have a cap that I put on, and so long as I wear that no bullet can get me. I got it from a Chinaman at Port Arthur, a good fellow he was, too. I wonder where he is now. The Sergeant-Major tells me I shall soon be sent up for the St. George's Cross. God grant it, and then I shall return to you, brother, a regular cavalier. . . ."

Scarcely less captivating than the Japanese soldier's fiery patriotism is the sturdy fighting spirit displayed in the above characteristic document with its stolid references to a long series of hard fights, and the queer, little superstitious touch about the charmed cap. It will be noted that from first to last there is only one complaint, that of being called upon to retire when "we" would have preferred to stay and fight it out to the bitter end. Incidentally it may be recalled that this gallant fellow's regiment was certainly concerned in the Battle of Liao-yang. As a matter of fact, it was the 10th Siberian Rifle Regiment which occupied the old town of Liao-yang, and, before retiring, took the opportunity of looting the place. Let us hope that our simple friend was not concerned in that objectionable performance, but took his manful share of the fighting, duly protected by his wonderful cap!

Having dealt with the impression created by the Battle of Liao-yang upon the Japanese and the Russian public, and having further taken a glance at the armies in the field, let us now turn to the effect of this great operation upon

British and Continental opinion. It is a very interesting circumstance that this battle marks a very decided change in the policy of Japan as regards foreign criticism of her naval and military operations. Allusion has been made on several occasions to the strictness of the Japanese censorship, and every allowance has been made in this narrative for the necessity imposed upon a country, which is literally fighting for its life, of shrouding its movements in the greatest possible secrecy. But Japan has gone, perhaps, a little farther than is necessary in this direction, and has fettered honourable and experienced representatives of the foreign Press with restrictions which have not unnaturally been resented. The fact that the representative of the leading English journal should have had to sever his connection with the Japanese Army in order to furnish his paper with an independent account of the movements of Generals Oku and Nozu was painfully suggestive of a needless attempt at gagging. It was becoming apparent, too, that the position of foreign correspondents would not be improved unless the Japanese authorities were made to feel that Press censorship can be carried to extremes which are not only objectionable, but risky. There is no need here to expatiate upon the means adopted, but after the Battle of Liao-yang the Japanese Government suddenly became aware that, in treating the representatives of the foreign Press as if they were a pack of prying children, it had converted powerful friends into embittered critics. As a Tokio journal remarked, it began to seem likely that the success of the next Japanese loan would be endangered by the anxiety of the Japanese generals to keep all the correspondents about them closely and perpetually blindfolded.

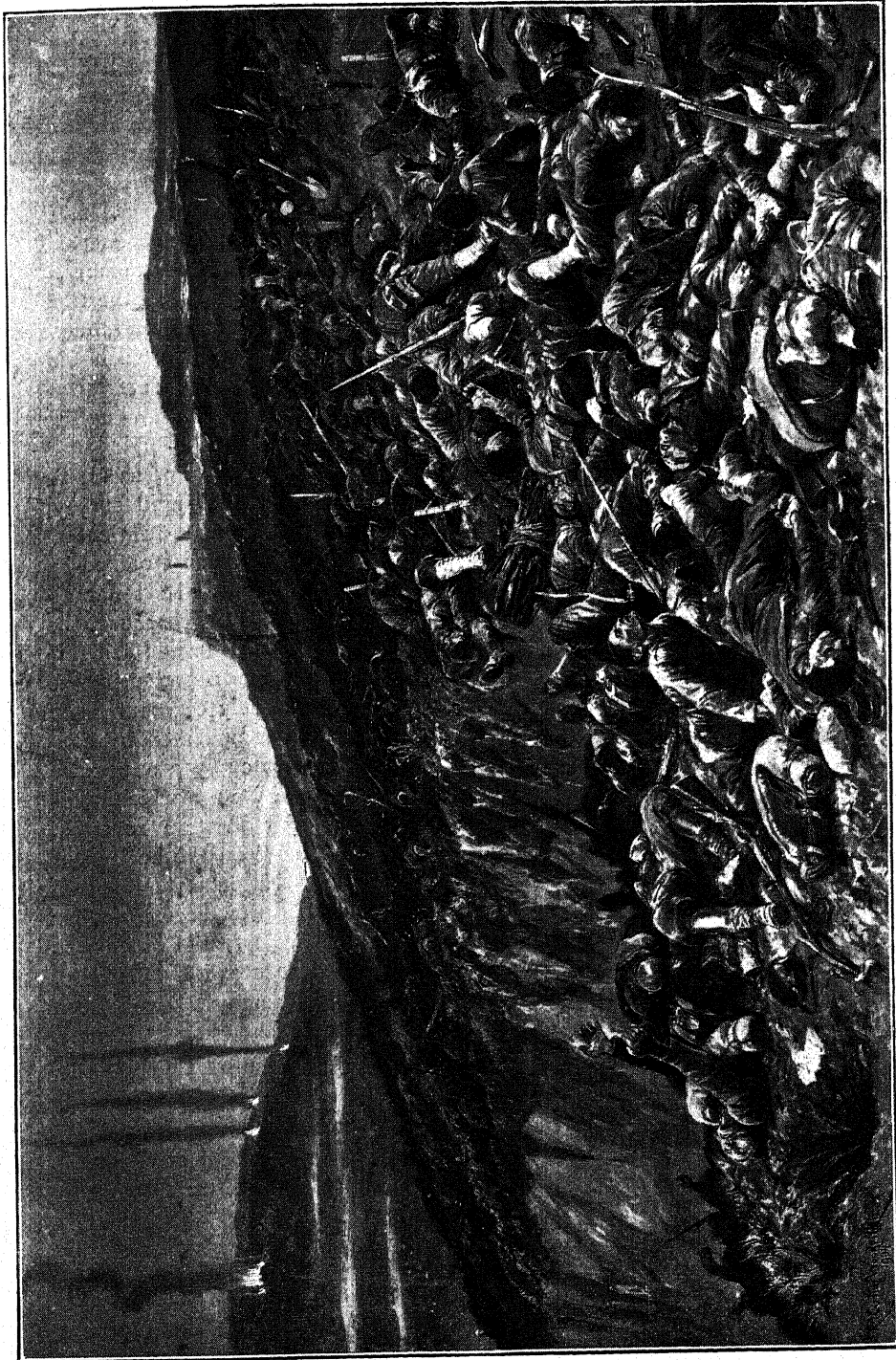


OYAMA'S OBJECTIVE: THE APPROACH TO MUKDEN, AND THE PASS OF TIE-LING.

*At Tie-ling the plain closes in to a valley through which run the river, railway, and main road. This is the wide gate between Northern and Southern Manchuria.*

There is no occasion for us to argue the *pros* and *cons* of this question. It is sufficient to say that the Japanese Government realised that its policy in the

matter of the censorship had serious drawbacks, and that public opinion in foreign countries was a factor to be reckoned with. Accordingly, Field-Mar-



THE COST OF VICTORY: THE HIDEOUS CARNAGE ON THE SOU-SHAN HILL, ONE OF THE MOST HOTLY CONTESTED POSITIONS AT LIAO-YANG.

"On the south front rose a conical hill, the whole face of which was a steep green slope. It was strewn thickly with Japanese dead. In one cluster lay over three hundred bodies. The wide area of the trench upon the summit was filled with badly mangled dead soldiers. There lay, upon a space no larger than Primrose Hill, the corpses of a thousand men."—Extract from a telegram in the Daily Telegraph from Mr. Bennet Burleigh, the war correspondent.



shal Yamagata, as Chief of the General Staff at Tokio, telegraphed to Field-Marshal Oyama as follows :—

“The Imperial declaration of war, as proclaimed to the people, is universally recognised as being based upon broad principles of justice. It makes no distinction of race, religion, or national manners and customs. The sole objects of the war are to ensure the safety of this Empire, to guarantee the peace of the Orient, to spread the blessings of civilisation and humanity, and to promote the general interests of all nations. It is, therefore, earnestly hoped that these principles will also find expression in the treatment of the foreign officers and correspondents attached to our army, and that, so long as the rule of military secrecy is not infringed, frank and candid consideration will be extended to them, so that the spirit of sincerity which animates this Empire may be fully demonstrated to the whole world.”

It is clear that this exhortation had its due effect, for after Liao-yang the Press correspondence becomes much fuller and very much more instructive, and one representative sends a special message expatiating upon the happy change that has taken place in the conditions under which he is working.

While the correspondents with the Japanese Army have had much cause for complaint, those with the Russian headquarters have hardly been on velvet. But the grievance here has been not so much on the score of the censorship as on that of doubtful treatment as regards creature comforts. M. Naudeau, the correspondent of the *Paris Journal*, from whose despatches, duly passed by the censor, several passages relating to the retreat from Liao-yang were quoted in Chapter LVII., speaks very bitterly of

the difficulties thrown in the way of himself and all his *confrères*, M. Dantchenko alone excepted. It is said that, but for an occasional French missionary, these correspondents might more than once have risked dying of hunger! Almost all had had dysentery, of which one had died. It must, however, be remembered that the Russian Army had, at the time this statement was made, been almost constantly in retreat, and in such circumstances the claims of Press correspondents to consideration are apt to be disregarded.

It now remains to ascertain, as far as is possible in a brief and rapid survey, to what extent British and Continental opinion on the war has been modified by the Liao-yang operations. It is not altogether easy to do this, because the standpoints from which the non-belligerent nations of Europe approached the subject were so curiously different, each being more or less complicated by considerations of alliance or by a reluctance to give offence to a Power which, notwithstanding its Far Eastern reverses, still loomed very large on the horizon of European politics. England may be said to have been frankly prejudiced in favour of her ally, Japan, just as France was naturally inclined to stand by her ally, Russia. Germany may have been anxious not to offend her “Eastern neighbour” by overmuch plainness of speech, and Austria-Hungary, associated with Russia in the question of forcing the reforms in Macedonia upon the Sultan, would doubtless have preferred not to have expressed an opinion, one way or another. Indeed, for some time past the official Press in Vienna had maintained great reserve on the subject of the war, and editorial references to the Japanese successes had been entirely suspended.



But the Battle of Liao-yang was an event of such commanding significance, was of such absorbing interest in a historical as well as political and military sense, that it could not be passed over in silence. Accordingly, for about a week the Press of Europe simply hummed with comment on the recent fighting and the new situation which it had produced.

It is one of the surprises of contemporary history, that nowhere was the Japanese victory at Liao-yang received with more cool discrimination than in this country. Here and there dithyrambics were indulged in; but the general tendency among competent critics was to lay somewhat serious stress upon the indecisive character of the success attained, and to point out that, unless it were rapidly followed up, such improvement as had taken place in the Japanese position would soon be obscured by fresh risks. It was realised that the skill with which Kuropatkin had extricated himself from what might have been a very deadly situation, and had even at one time gravely menaced his adversary, placed the future chances of Russia in a new light. A general capable of such enlightened strategy was a force to be reckoned with, now that the main armies of the two combatant nations were in conflict. Every credit was given to the Japanese conception of an envelopment; but the failure of the plan, and the heavy losses inflicted upon the armies of Oku and Nozu by a comparatively small Russian rear-guard, considerably impressed the more thoughtful among British military critics. That the result was a Japanese victory was extremely gratifying to Japan's ally, but British military opinion is nothing if not candid, and in more than one quarter it was felt that the success had been far too dearly

bought, and that more must be done, and done quickly, if Japan were to reap any sort of advantage from her recent movements.

The Japanese were much hurt at this "change of sentiment," as they imagined it to be, and attributed it largely to the dissatisfaction of the war correspondents, because they had not been given larger facilities. They pointed out that they had secured Liao-yang, "the richest town in Manchuria, the chief emporium of local supplies and foodstuffs, and the principal strategical base." They urged that the Russians had been "signally defeated," and had been compelled to burn or abandon ammunition and provisions in such quantities that to make good the loss would demand several months' work on the Siberian Railway. Finally, they hoped that the embittered criticism of war correspondents with a grievance would not be allowed to warp the judgment and undermine the confidence of the British nation at large.

It is almost needless to say that the class of expert British military opinion, to which reference has been made, could not have been seriously influenced by the treatment, however tactless, accorded by the Japanese to the foreign correspondents. Nor would any military critic worthy of the name fail to recognise and give full weight to the substantial advantages secured by Japan in the occupation of Liao-yang. But the fact remained that Japan had spent some months in weaving a net wherewith to catch the entire Russian Army, and, when the time had come for casting it, the meshes had been found too large, and the fish had mostly slipped through. Nor could any amount of argument explain away the fact that Kuropatkin was still in evidence only a few miles off with nearly 200,000

men, and with the Siberian Railway bringing him fresh men and supplies almost every hour.

As we shall shortly see, the British estimate of the gravity of the situation after the Battle of Liao-yang came to be modified by a fresh instance of Russian military unwisdom which could hardly

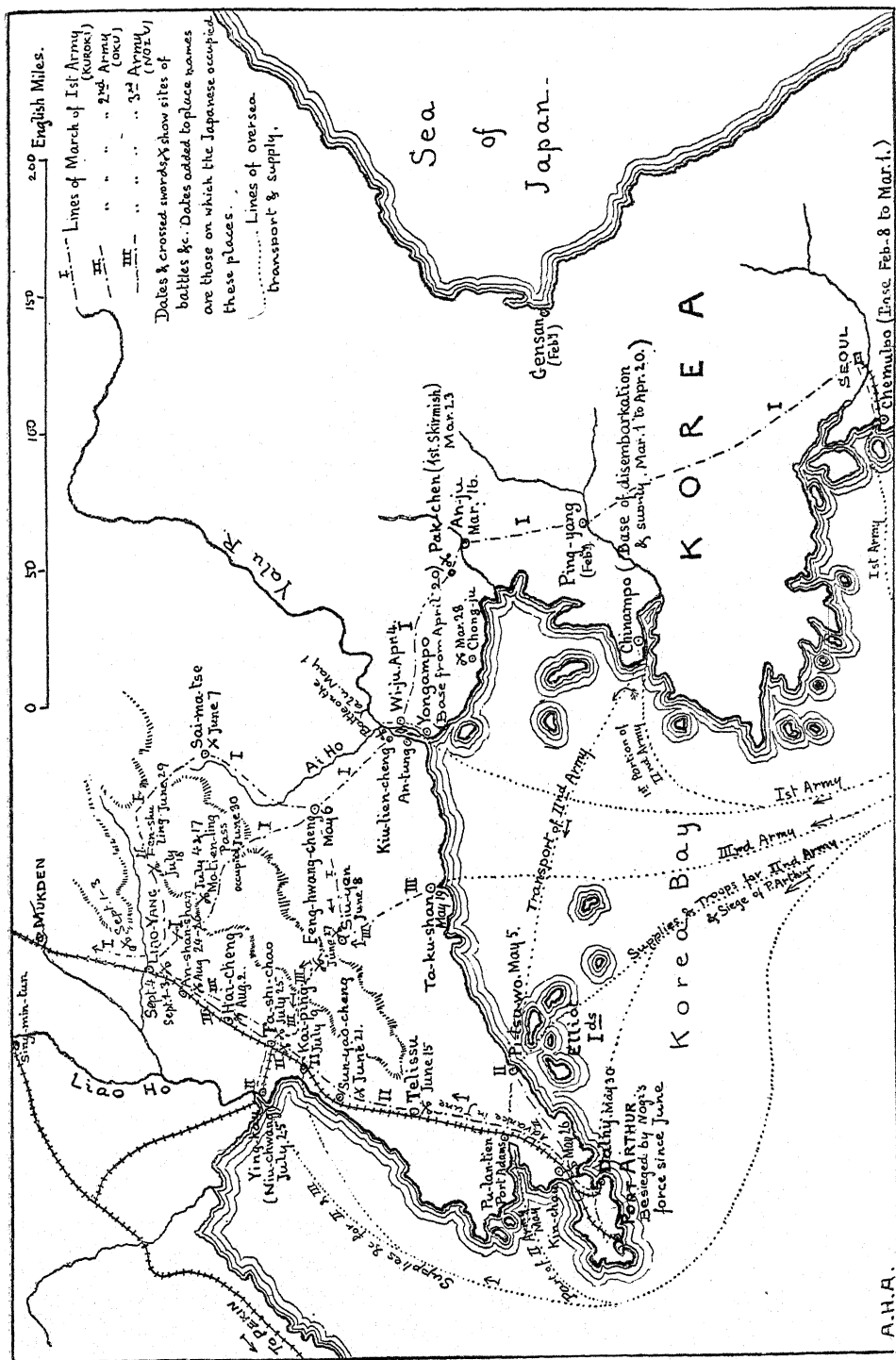
been somewhat similarly placed in dealing with remote menaces to our supremacy. While deference to Japanese susceptibilities forbids the enlargement of this argument, the allusion may be useful to defend British critics from the charge of being quite unworthily prejudiced by small personal considerations.



THE STAFF OF A RUSSIAN TRAVELLING HOSPITAL.

have been foreseen. But, at the time, the expert view taken by men who would not allow their Japanese sympathies to blind them to clear military facts was undoubtedly the only view that comprehended the European as well as the Far Eastern prospect. We, perhaps more clearly than any other European nation, understood what the preservation of the bulk of Kuropatkin's Army from destruction meant to Russia, for we have

While in Great Britain the feeling was one of some apprehension lest a new prospect not wholly favourable to Japan had been unfolded, Continental journals were almost unanimous in deploring the great blow which had fallen upon Russia. In France the prevailing sentiment was one of profound regret for Russia, coupled with a strong hope that now some peaceful settlement would be possible. A French correspondent, whom



## HOW JAPAN LANDED HER FORCES IN KOREA AND MANCHURIA.

*Sketch map showing the routes of the Armies under Generals Kuroki, Oku and Noto, from the first landing at Chemulpo on February 8, 1904, to the investment of Port Arthur and the great victory at Liaoyang on September 4.*

we have quoted before, was allowed to speak very candidly in the *Journal* as to Russia's prospects of gaining the upper hand. "No doubt if Russia sets her teeth to this task she will yet be victorious, but this will imply astounding efforts, the results of which will be out of all proportion with the sacrifices. An impartial witness is necessarily saddened by the struggle. I, for my part, am persuaded that it would be in the interest of both parties to renounce their national pride, and by mutual concessions put an end to this war, which is a real and terrible disaster that will be the ruin of both. I make no mention of the unfortunate population of a whole vast province which, belonging to neither party, is the blood-stained victim of their terrible struggle. There are cases in which national pride should not be blindly heeded."

The military criticism offered by France upon the operations at Liao-yang was naturally cautious. In the *Temps* General Orloff was made the scapegoat of the defeat, which was not regarded as a tactical disaster, but only as the "sorry conclusion of courageous, sterile, and persevering efforts." Lieut.-General Picquart, in *L'Aurore*, emphasised what has already been independently put forward in this chapter as to the utter want of initiative displayed by the Russian soldier. "In Russia it is impossible to employ an infantryman on patrol duty or as a scout. The ordinary soldier there is comparatively useless if he does not manœuvre in obedience to order and in compact formations." As for Russian tactics, they are those of "ignorant and fanatical persons!" The Japanese successes are "the victory of the Japanese schoolmaster over the Russian pope."

The German Government journals did

their best to minimise the significance of the Russian defeat; but in other organs much admiration was expressed for Japanese tactics. A sentence from the *Kreuz Zeitung* of September 2nd, written while the battle was still in progress, may be quoted as an instructive though not quite accurate prediction: "The 1st of September, 1904, presents an extraordinary likeness to the 1st of September, 1870, with this difference that, radiating in all directions from Sedan there was a large number of roads by which it was possible to break through, whereas from Liao-yang there is only the road leading to Mukden. The Russians will assuredly not fail to break out in that direction, but one cannot help doubting whether they will succeed." In the *Lokalanzeiger* of Berlin, Count von Pfeil wrote a little later that Kuropatkin evidently relied on the assistance of General Linievitch, who, it was suggested, was held back by Admiral Alexeieff.

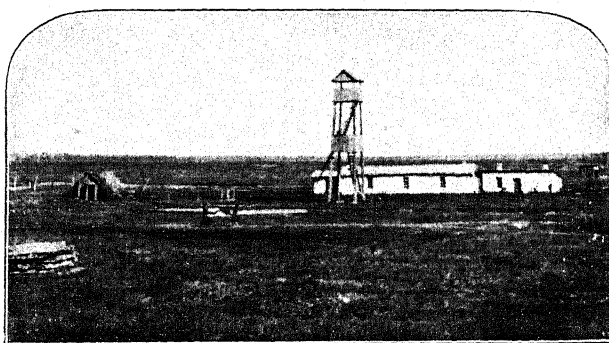
In Austria-Hungary, where, apart from official circles, pro-Japanese sentiments were pretty freely expressed, the Liao-yang battle was very seriously discussed. "The fuller tidings of the Japanese triumph," wrote the Vienna correspondent of the *Times*, "evoked enthusiasm. The tenacity and dogged bravery of the Russian troops are everywhere recognised, and nowhere is it suggested that any European soldiers would have made a better stand against such a foe; but admiration for the brilliant leading of the Japanese attack, and for the unprecedented combination of scientific training with passionate gallantry among the Japanese rank and file, overcome every other sentiment."

In Italy the fullest credit was given to the Japanese generals for their tactics, but much the same view was expressed

as in England as to the doubtful prospect. Liao-yang was compared with Leipsic, and it was suggested that Kuropatkin might consummate his effort to escape by winning another Hanau.

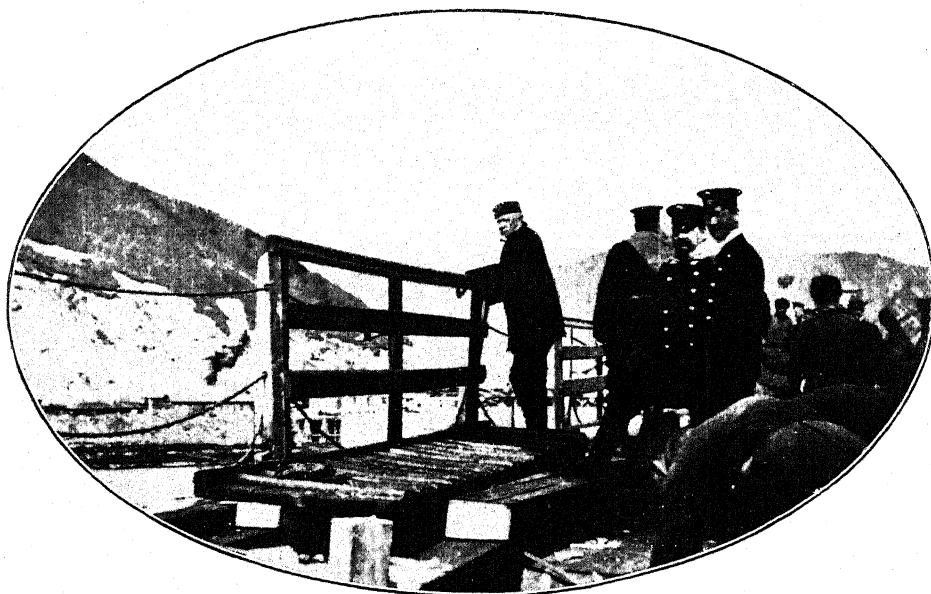
These excerpts will suffice to show the trend of European opinion on the Liao-yang battle, individually considered. But many more would be needed to demonstrate what was, after all, the most serious result of the Japanese victory as far as Europe was concerned. This result has been defined by one Continental paper as "the collapse of belief in Russian omnipotence," and beyond this happy definition it would be premature to travel far at present. At the same time it will be readily understood that the Battle of Liao-yang marked the beginning of an inevitable change in the position, diplomatically and internationally speaking, of Russia in Europe. Russia's immense resources, and, more particularly, her military strength, had long been articles of faith among European nations, and she had presumed heavily on them by asserting her right to interfere very arbitrarily, more especially of course in all Near Eastern affairs. Although there had still remained a

shrewd notion that the feet of the Colossus were of clay, a good deal of diplomatic deference had been paid to Russia on the ground that it was better to make some concession than to call into operation the tremendous forces which the Tsar was supposed to have under ready control. The first six months of the Russo-Japanese War had gone far towards rectifying these mistaken notions. But, until the Battle of Liao-yang took place, Russia could always plead unpreparedness or an overwhelming numerical superiority on the enemy's part. Now she had been fairly and squarely beaten in an honest trial of strength, and the crumbling of her Far Eastern supremacy was not unnaturally followed by a marked diminution of her European prestige. It is too early as yet to estimate the precise effect of her humiliation upon the balance of power in Europe. But it may be freely said that a long interval must elapse before she is again allowed to dominate, for example, the Near Eastern Question, as she did while as yet her main army in Manchuria was unbeaten, and Oyama had not expelled nearly 200,000 of her best troops "bag and baggage" from Liao-yang.



TYPE OF COSSACK GUARD STATION AND WATCH TOWER FOR THE  
DEFENCE OF THE SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

(From Foster Fraser's "The Real Siberia.")



*Photo: Nouvelle, Paris.*

PRINCE KHLKOFF ON LAKE BAIKAL.

## CHAPTER LX.

THE RUSSIAN MILITARY COMMAND IN MANCHURIA—NEW ARMY WANTED—A MOBILISATION ORDER—GENERAL GRIPENBERG'S APPOINTMENT—INTRIGUES AT ST. PETERSBURG—KUROPATKIN GENERALISSIMO—ALEXEIEFF LOSING FAVOUR—COMPOSITION OF SECOND ARMY.

**I**N the preceding chapter we have glanced at the Russian Army in the field, have touched lightly on the shortcomings of the officers, and have dealt more or less indulgently with that brave, simple-minded fellow the Russian private soldier. We have now to follow the military operations of Russia in a new direction, one of immense interest and importance, namely, the attempted construction of a new Manchurian Army, and a readjustment of the entire system of Russian military control in the Far East.

On looking back it will be seen that

in a military sense Russia not only was utterly unprepared for war with Japan, but had arranged her forces in the Far East on about as bad a system as could possibly have been conceived with a view to urgent probabilities. When the crisis arrived there was no one on the spot who could be safely entrusted with the supreme military command; and, when in due course a Commander-in-Chief, Kuropatkin, was imported from Russia, he was the last man between whom and the Viceroy Alexeieff any harmonious co-operation was possible. We have seen the terrible effects of this mistaken

policy, and have gleaned some idea of the shameless intrigues which have prevented Kuropatkin from doing himself justice. At the close of the Battle of Liao-yang it has become clear that to persevere along this insane line will simply mean a series of fresh and probably more serious disasters. Something must be done, and done quickly, and Russia does it. Whether what is done is the right thing is another matter ; but at any rate the new conception is impressive, and from a Russian standpoint full of attractive possibilities.

In a story of this sort there is no necessity to pay very close attention to details of military organisation, and care has been taken not to overload these pages with precise allusions to Army Corps and other units. In the course of this chapter it may be necessary at times to particularise a little more closely, but for the present it is sufficient to say that, shortly after the Battle of Liao-yang Kuropatkin must have still had at his immediate disposal the equivalent of between six and seven army corps ; in other words, perhaps rather more than 200,000 men. What is a more important consideration is that the bulk of this great army is, so to speak, bunched together, and in any case is expected to respond more or less swiftly to the direct instructions of the Commander-in-Chief. This is doubtful policy, since there have been few leaders in the world's history who have been capable of controlling effectively an army of more than 100,000 or, at most, 150,000 men. Even when partly distributed, huge bodies like this occupy a great deal of ground, and it needs very extraordinary military talent to

manœuvre with equal freedom and effectiveness forces which may be twenty or thirty miles or more apart.

In the case of Japan, it is clear that not far short of quarter of a million men are in a sense under the control of Field-Marshal Oyama; but the conditions are altogether different. The forces of Japan



GENERAL BILDERLING.

are intelligently distributed into armies, only one of which, General Kuroki's, approaches the maximum which one commander of real ability can comfortably handle. Each of the three armies engaged round Liao-yang, moreover, was led by men to whom a very considerable amount of discretion could be allowed, and who could, at the same time, be



trusted to carry out the general ideas of their supreme chief. What Oyama commanded, then, was not so much an army of 250,000 men as three first-class generals to whom he could safely leave the details necessary for the execution of the strategy decided upon by himself in co-operation with the General Staff at Tokio.

Contrast this with the difficulties with which Kuropatkin has had to contend. Never could a man be more truly said to command an army, for under him there is hardly a single man of first-class merit as a controller of great forces of all arms. In point of experience and, perhaps, sagacity, General Linievitch, who commands the Amur military district, of which the chief military centre is Vladivostok, is the most prominent. But Linievitch is getting old, and it is extremely doubtful whether he could stand such a strain as even the post of second-in-command to Kuropatkin would involve. The only other first-class general in the Russian Army in Manchuria seems to be General Bilderling, who, however, has yet to be tried on a large scale. Generals Stackelberg and Zarubaieff have not greatly distinguished themselves so far, except in rear-guard fighting, which is a thing apart. General Ivanoff has been a doubtful successor to General Count Keller, and General Sassulitch has hardly as yet made amends for his poor handling of the Russian troops at Kiu-lien-cheng. General Meyendorf, who recently came out from Russia in command of the First Army Corps, may be a "dark horse," but will have to display a number of unsuspected qualities before he can be regarded as on quite the same footing as Kuroki and his two colleagues Oku and Nozu.

Of course, there are some very good

men among the Russian major-generals, but the successful major-general does not always do well when promoted to higher responsibilities. Thus Kashtalinski created a favourable impression at Kiu-lien-cheng, but did not shine very brightly in the attack on the Motien-ling on July 17th. Again, General Gerngross has yet to enlarge upon the good work he did at Telissu and elsewhere before he can be accounted as fit to rank with commanders of the first class. The same remark applies, with variations, to dashing leaders like Samsonoff, Mishtchenko, and Rennenkamf, not to speak of the senior, but probably, as regards troop-handling, less experienced Chief of the Staff, Sakharoff.

It will be seen from this brief survey that General Kuropatkin may be not inappropriately described as over-manned and under-officered. He has at his disposal more men than any but a Napoleon could properly handle, and he cannot essay the rôle of a Moltke because the deficiencies of his generals make it necessary for him to appear constantly in what is to all intents and purposes an executive part. The Tsar and his advisers at St. Petersburg, then, are face to face with the initial problem of making some change in the higher system of military control in the Far East which will enable better results to be obtained both from Kuropatkin and from the very considerable army already in the field.

On the heels of this problem presses another. Large as Kuropatkin's army is, it is evidently inferior both in numerical strength and efficiency to that under the control of Field-Marshal Oyama. In order successfully to resist, not to speak of making headway against, the future efforts of Japan, reinforcements of the biggest sort and size will be necessary,

the campaign being practically reopened on a fresh basis in the spring. This is not such an empty dream as it might have seemed a few months ago, although, of course, there are grave difficulties in the way of reinforcing an army already in a somewhat precarious position both as regards hostile pressure and supplies. Not only is the Siberian Railway still

Of course, as regards mere soldiers Russia's resources are ample. She has normally twenty-five army corps in Europe and the Caucasus, besides two in Turkestan, and the two which normally belong to the Amur district. Six or seven corps have been sent, or are on their way, to the Far East, and although for purposes of war in Europe the Rus-



GENERAL KASHTALINSKI.

working, but its usefulness has been enormously increased by the construction, under the energetic personal supervision of Prince Khilkoff, the Russian Minister for Public Works, of the Circum-Baikal Section. This, it will be remembered, was put vigorously in hand at the commencement of the war in order to save the trying journey across Lake Baikal; and the recent opening of the section is a striking monument to Russian perseverance and disregard of engineering obstacles.

sian scheme of mobilisation is a somewhat tardy and cumbrous one, the collection of an imposing array of forces for transference by comparatively easy stages to the Far East is not half such a difficult task as that of arranging for their transport and maintenance.

Let us now examine the steps which Russia, after the Battle of Liao-yang, takes to improve her military position in the Far East; to put into practice the lessons she has acquired by her own

failures and the Japanese successes; and to profit by the substantial advantages conferred by a huge trained army and a stringent system of compulsory military service.

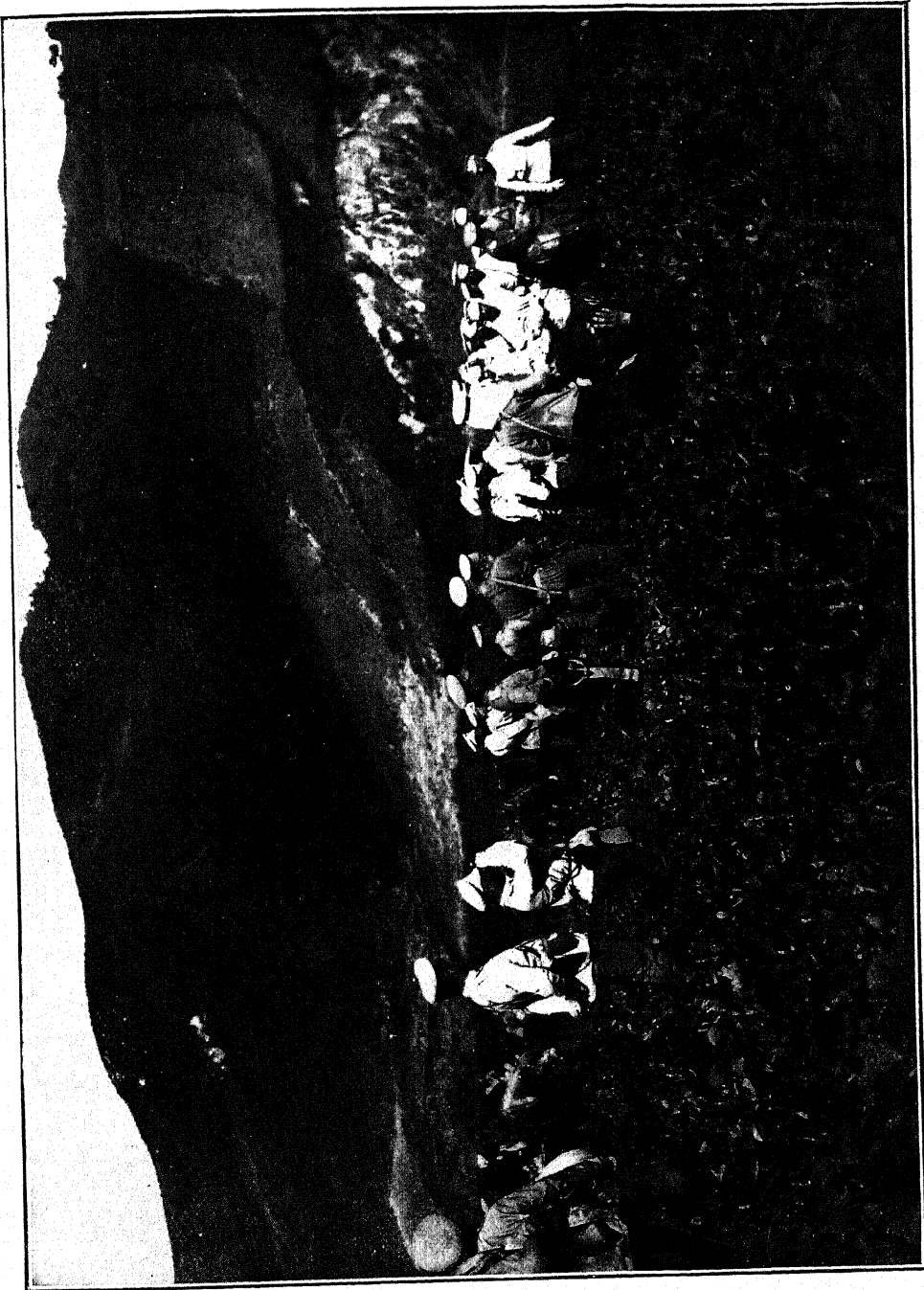
On August 20th it was announced from St. Petersburg that an Imperial ukase had been issued ordering the calling out of the reservists in forty-seven districts of the governments of Poltava, Kursk, Tver, Samara, Saratoff, Astrakhan, Ufa, Simbirsk, Perm, St. Petersburg, Novgorod, Pskoff, Livonia, Esthonia, Archangel, and Olonetz. Certain categories of reservists were specially called out in addition, and all reserve officers throughout the Empire were called to the colours.

This ukase, described by the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *New York Herald* (Paris edition) as "Russia's reply to the Japanese assertions that the war is nearly over," created a profound impression throughout the Tsar's dominions. Affecting as it did all classes of the population, the gravity of this military measure was eagerly discussed by crowds even in the streets of St. Petersburg, and general alarm and apprehension were excited as to the effect of the apparently interminable war upon the political and financial future of Russia.

When the British Army Reserves were called out in the South African War, an example of patriotic enthusiasm was afforded which is not likely to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Even in the case of married reservists who had to throw up good positions in civil life in order to rejoin the colours, the utmost willingness was exhibited; and employers and the public readily came forward in order to guarantee comfortable subsistence allowances to wives and families thus deprived of their chief means of

support. But it must be remembered that with us in those days the Army Reserve only numbered about 80,000 men, a large proportion of whom would have gladly gone back, war or no war, to the service which they had voluntarily adopted as their profession. There is an obvious distinction to be drawn between a case like this and that of a country where military service is compulsory, and where the available reserve is estimated to contain over a million men. Of course, the Imperial ukase referred to above does not mean that all that number of men were withdrawn suddenly from civil occupations. As a matter of fact many thousands of reservists have been called up already, and many more will remain after the present ukase has been complied with. But the districts now affected are mostly those in which reservists are in fairly good positions, earning decent wages, and supporting often considerable families. The outlook in the latter case is especially depressing. The wives and children of the men now summoned to the colours, and the mothers and fathers of unmarried reservists dependent upon the latter for support, are, it is true, entitled to a Government allowance, but it is indeed a meagre one. A wife is allowed three roubles (a rouble is worth about 2s. 2d.) *a month*, with one rouble for each child. A monthly allowance of three roubles is also made to mothers who lose the support of unmarried sons. It goes without saying, moreover, that where the call to arms affects such enormous numbers, private benevolence can do little to assist the victims of official parsimony.

The natural result is that the mobilisation order meets with a very doubtful response. In some instances there are numerous reservists who simply decline



GENERAL KUROPATKIN AND STAFF EXAMINING A POSITION.

to turn up at the district headquarters on the appointed day. In other cases there are grave disturbances, and nowhere is there any display of real enthusiasm. Some of the statistics of the "missing" are instructive. A little later than the ukase just quoted comes the order for mobilisation in the four governments of Kherson, Bessarabia, Ekaterinoslaf, and the Taurida. In the last named the proportion of absentees is said to be not very great, but in Ekaterinoslaf about 3,000 reservists are reported missing, about the same number in Bessarabia, and nearly 8,000 in Kherson. In the government of Kherson there are a great many Jews who have emigrated during the last four or five months, evidently with a view to escape the mobilisation, and this fact seems to have greatly swollen the absentee return. But in any case the lists are painfully indicative of anything but patriotic fervour.

Some striking information on the subject of these absentees, who are in effect deserters, is given by one of the Russian correspondents of the *Times*. It is said that they will do anything to avoid being sent to Manchuria, and that men inscribed in one military district are to be found hundreds of miles away from it, living from hand to mouth, without passports, in the hope that their existence may be forgotten. "The police are overwhelmed with work in trying to track out these deserters, and the partial relaxations of the measures against political offenders is due to this cause. Desertion is becoming so general, that it is hardly possible to cope with it." There is also the strongest disinclination to Far Eastern service on the part of officers of the reserve, for the most part men who have put in a year's service as privates and, having then passed an

examination after a few weeks' special training, have returned to business or private life. However, it seems that reserve officers are not alone in their reluctance to serve their country against the Japanese. "One officer in a Guards regiment in St. Petersburg, on being asked by a British officer, who happened to be in Russia, if he were not going to the front, and whether he could not obtain some Staff billet by means of influence at Court, replied: 'Of course I could, but I much prefer remaining with my regiment in St. Petersburg!'" This is hardly the same spirit as that which prompts our Guards' officers to volunteer for all sorts of arduous service in remote and unhealthy wilds, and which sent representatives of every noble family in the country to fight as Imperial Yeomen against the Boers.

But, of course, taking all these drawbacks into account, Russia's capacity to put in the field, or at any rate to mobilise, an army quite as large as that already under Kuropatkin's command is, practically speaking, undoubted. We may now, therefore, turn to the question as to what Russia intends to do in order to put the matter of the supreme command of her troops in Manchuria on a better footing.

As early as the middle of July there were rumours that the General Staff at St. Petersburg was preparing, in concert with the Tsar and the principal Imperial officials, a modification of the existing military hierarchy in the Far East. Not only was it becoming evident that General Kuropatkin could only with difficulty control the remote extremities of his constantly increasing forces, the General Staff had also been profoundly impressed with the mobility of the Japanese, which was clearly due in great

measure to their division into three armies under independent commanders. Accordingly, the idea was mooted of a Second Russian Army entirely separate from the First, which would still be commanded by General Kuropatkin. The

neither of these two was selected, but General Sukhotin may well be kept in view by the reader as an officer with a brilliant reputation, who is likely sooner or later to come to the front in connection with the war.



GENERAL SUKHOTIN.

two "favourites" for the command of the Second Army were General Sukhotin, ex-President of the General Staff Academy, and now in command in Eastern Siberia; and General Sukhomlinoff, now in command of the Kieff Military District. As it turned out,

On September 25th considerable sensation was created at St. Petersburg by the announcement that General Gripenberg, commanding the Military District of Wilna, had been appointed to the command of the Second Manchurian Army. Simultaneously it became known that in

acquainting General Gripenberg with his elevation to this extremely responsible post, the Tsar had written him the following autograph letter:—

"The intense energy with which Japan is conducting the war, and the stubbornness and high warlike qualities displayed by the Japanese, impel me to make considerable additions to the strength of my forces at the front in order to attain a decisive success within the shortest possible time. Since in the accomplishment of this the number of military units will reach such a figure that their continuance in one army is not admissible without prejudice to the proper direction, manoeuvring, and mobility of the troops, I have found it necessary to divide the troops destined for active service in Manchuria into two armies.

"While leaving the command of one of these armies in the hands of General Kuropatkin, I appoint you to command the second. Your many years of service, your warlike exploits, and your wide experience in the warlike training of troops give me full assurance that you, following the general directions of the Commander-in-Chief, will successfully lead to the attainment of the object of this war the army which is entrusted to you, and which will show its own valour and power of endurance in the fight against the foe for the honour and dignity of the fatherland. God bless you for your great and glorious services to me and to Russia. I remain ever your affectionate NICHOLAS."

Oscar Casimirovitch Gripenberg, who has received this signal mark of Imperial confidence, was born in 1838, and is now, therefore, sixty-six years old, and with exactly half a century of military service to his credit. He won his spurs in the Crimea, served later in the Polish Insur-

rection, and distinguished himself greatly in the campaign in Turkestan. During the Russo-Turkish War, as colonel in command of one of the regiments of the Guards, he won an action at Arab Konak, and received the third class of the Order of St. George, besides being appointed one of the Tsar's aides-de-camp. After holding several posts connected with the Guards, General Gripenberg became, in 1900, Commander of the 6th Army Corps, at Warsaw, and later was given charge of the military district of Wilna. Only a few weeks back, on the occasion of the baptism of the Tsarevitch, the Tsar gave him the title of Aide-de-Camp General. It is said that General Gripenberg's training under Gourko, in Turkestan, helped to make him "not merely an officer capable of rapid decision and a strict disciplinarian, but a strategist of the first rank, who has the absolute confidence of his troops." On the other hand, he is believed to be a little unpopular among his officers, he is getting on in years, and he has had one attack of apoplexy. It must also be remembered that, notwithstanding his "warlike exploits," of which the Tsar speaks so approvingly, the new Commander of the future Second Army of Manchuria has held in none of his campaigns any command of sufficient importance to enable us to judge whether he can lead a large army successfully against such an enemy as the Japanese.

On yet another ground the appointment of General Gripenberg is surprising, for he is described by one authority as "a Protestant and a German from Livonia," and by another as of Finnish extraction. In this connection the Paris correspondent of the *Times* makes the interesting observation that of late the confidence of the Tsar has been freely bestowed on officers of foreign origin.





GENERAL GRIPENBERG, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF  
OF THE SECOND MANCHURIAN ARMY.



Apart from General Gripenberg, one of whose Finn ancestors is said to have distinguished himself under Charles XII., and another under Gustavus III., the families of Admiral Avellan, Minister of Marine, and Admiral Wirenus are also Finnish, while the Jessens and Rennenkamfs are of German extraction. General Kuropatkin himself is believed to be one of the few pure-blooded Muscovite superior officers who have distinguished themselves in the Far East.

General Gripenberg is said by some to owe his appointment largely to the influence of Prince Mirski, the new Minister of the Interior in place of the assassinated M. de Plehve. Others declare that the Tsar acted on the advice of the Grand Duke Vladimir, the latter having exerted himself to place at the head of the Second Manchurian Army an officer whose character and military traditions are the opposite of those of General Kuropatkin. Almost universally the appointment is considered to be an undeserved snub to Kuropatkin, more especially as it is explained that the term "Commander-in-Chief," in the Tsar's letter to General Gripenberg, is intended to refer, not to Kuropatkin, but to the Viceroy, Alexeieff.

The Tsar is evidently anxious not to hurt Kuropatkin's feelings unduly, for, according to a very well informed French correspondent, he telegraphs in affectionate terms to the only Russian Commander-in-Chief in Manchuria who is worthy of the name, explaining his reasons for the formation of a second army, and for the choice of General Gripenberg. Kuropatkin happily replies that he is grateful for the appointment of his friend and former companion in Turkestan. A little later he telegraphs to Gripenberg himself as follows:—

"As soon as the rumours of your ap-

pointment as Commander-in-Chief of the Second Manchurian Army reached me I sent you a letter and various documents which I thought were likely to be useful to you in connection with your appointment. Now that the news is official, I beg you to accept my sincere congratulations. I recall with the keenest pleasure the time we served the Fatherland in Turkestan. During that campaign you were my master in the art of war. I am sure we shall work here as friends. May God further all your undertakings."

Truly it must be said of Kuropatkin that, whatever may be his shortcomings as a strategist—shortcomings for which he personally is not always responsible—he presents a very attractive example of a chivalrous, patriotic, and high-minded "officer and gentleman."

Following on the appointment of General Gripenberg to the command of the Second Army there ensues an interval of lively intrigue at St. Petersburg, in which, as usual, nearly everyone with influence at Court seems to take part. The condition of affairs created by the Tsar's letter to Gripenberg undoubtedly favours military wire-pulling at home. Although it may suit Kuropatkin's opponents for the present to regard Admiral Alexeieff as not only Viceroy but Commander-in-Chief, it is clear that there will be grave objections to the continuance of any such arrangement. Even the Russian aristocracy is not wholly impervious to foreign opinion, and must have taken to heart such criticism as that frankly uttered by the German military paper the *Reichswehr*, which says—"It is the strangest thing possible, and surely without any known parallel, that a naval man should hold the chief command over two armies operating on land. If there might have been some sense in it so long

as co-operation between the Russian Army and Navy was still possible, it is incomprehensible now." Not less outspoken are several other Continental journals, one of which declares that the Viceroy will still "frustrate every measure not quite to his liking;" while another remarks that "on both Commanders will weigh the heavy hand of the intriguer Alexeieff!"

The first solution of the problem thus arising is highly characteristic of Russian methods. The suggestion is that the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaievitch, the Tsar's cousin, who is now Grand Master of the Russian Cavalry, should be appointed Commander-in-Chief in Manchuria, while Admiral Alexeieff remains at Harbin as Viceroy. There is probably a strong body of Court influence in favour of this arrangement, which would hamper Kuropatkin almost as much as does the existing plan, and would not necessitate Alexeieff's recall. We may take it that, in particular, the support of General Sakharoff, the Minister of War, has been gained for this proposed measure, since that official has shown himself a very pliant tool in the hands of the Grand Dukes. This General Sakharoff, by the way, must not be confounded with the General Sakharoff at the front, who has been acting as Kuropatkin's Chief of the Staff. He is the man who succeeded Kuropatkin as Minister of War when the latter went out to Manchuria, and he has been one of his predecessor's worst friends ever since.

Another proposition which finds favour in some quarters is that the veteran General Dragomiroff, whose name is a "household word" in the Russian Army, and who is largely responsible for the Russian system of military training, should be appointed to the supreme com-

mand. Here, again, antagonism to the unfortunate Kuropatkin is indicated, for Dragomiroff is strongly opposed to the latter. The objection to this eminent soldier is that he is undoubtedly old and infirm, but his friends insist that this need not be a bar to his appointment, since "stationed at Harbin he would become the Russian Moltke."

Quite at the end of September a Grand Council of War is held at Peterhof to determine the grave question of the supreme military command in Manchuria. There are present at this momentous conference the Tsar, the Grand Dukes Vladimir and Nicholas, the Minister of War, the Chief of the General Staff, and the Tsar's Aides-de-Camp. Although the deliberations of such an august assembly are, of course, shrouded in secrecy, there is every reason to believe that the result was much as described by M. Hutin, the able and well-posted St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Echo de Paris*. This authority, with what are evidently exceptional sources of information at his command, says that the appointment of the Grand Duke Nicholas was carefully discussed in that dignitary's own presence. It says much for Russia and her future chances that, at this critical moment, and in such circumstances, a voice should have been raised in strong opposition to the Grand Duke's claims, and in loyal support of those of Kuropatkin.

Whose voice this was we have no means of knowing. But M. Hutin says distinctly that it was not that of the Minister of War, and it is hardly likely to have been that of the Grand Duke Vladimir. "One of the Imperial Councillors . . . declared that General Kuropatkin had incontestably committed blunders during this campaign, but that

he had sufficient qualities of energy, endurance, and efficiency to turn to account in the next campaign the experience he had already acquired. This councillor affirmed that the highest interests of the Fatherland required before the world the maintenance of General Kuropatkin at the head of both armies, and that final victory depended on his retaining the post of Commander-in-Chief."

It is said that the Tsar was much impressed by these arguments, and that, on the breaking-up of the Council of War, he telegraphed to General Kuropatkin, announcing that the latter was to consider himself in command of both armies. Shortly afterwards it was semi-officially understood that the Grand Duke Nicholas Nicolaievitch had withdrawn his candidature for the supreme command in Manchuria, on the ground that he did not possess the necessary "qualities" for such an extremely responsible post. Thus to all appearance ends a singularly interesting and instructive chapter of Russian intrigue, which may be accepted as typical of much that has taken place with reference to the Far East both before and since the outbreak of the war with Japan. As remarked above, it is a very healthy sign of Russia's return to a condition of sanity, as regards her true interests in Manchuria, that the flood of underhand scheming against Kuropatkin should have thus been checked by vigorously delivered counsels of prudence. But the question remains whether the check may not have been administered too late to be of much practical use.

And now, what of the "heavy-handed intriguer" Alexeieff? It goes without saying that any mark of Imperial favour bestowed on Kuropatkin is a snub to the Viceroy, and the recognition of the former, not merely as the

"General Commanding in Manchuria," but as Commander-in-Chief or, as some say, Generalissimo, cannot but detract somewhat from the Viceregal position. Indeed, it would seem as if Alexeieff's glory were now distinctly on the wane. Not only in the Continental Press, but in St. Petersburg society, is he beginning to be spoken of in a tone of contempt. Especially is his conduct after the Battle of Liao-yang criticised. An officer of high rank has written home—and the letter is evidently exhibited freely—to say that, when the news of the retreat upon Mukden reached that place, Admiral Alexeieff, who was there, lost no time in preparing for the departure of his train. "He was in so great a hurry that he interrupted for some hours the departure of the southward bound trains, and, a stationmaster having neglected to signal the Viceroy's special, there was a terrible railway accident, forty wounded men in the ambulance train being killed." It will probably be hard even for a Russian Viceroy to "live down" an incident like that.

For some time after the Peterhof Council of War, rumour was busy anticipating Admiral Alexeieff's recall. It was said that he was about to be summoned home in order to discuss the situation more closely with the Tsar than was possible by correspondence or by wire; and that, once in St. Petersburg, he was to be kept there in some high appointment. But apparently his influence is still powerful, for nearly a month later he is again at Mukden "conferring" with Kuropatkin, notwithstanding the conviction which prevails that he is no longer regarded as having any military responsibility.

We may now revert to the question of the future composition and command of

the two Russian armies. It is not yet settled, at the beginning of October, who is to command the First Army when the Second comes into existence, and Kuropatkin formally assumes the Commander-in-Chiefship. The choice appears to lie between Generals Linievitch, Bilderling, and Kaulbars, but the matter is one which need not yet be seriously discussed. As regards the Second Army, it is officially announced that Lieut.-General Russki, who is understood to be a pupil of General Dragomiroff, has been appointed Chief of the Staff to General Gripenberg, Major-General Schwank becoming Quartermaster-General, and Lieut.-General Kahanoff Inspector of Artillery.

The Second Army, it is said, will be composed of the 4th, 8th, and 16th Army Corps, the 6th Siberian Corps, and several brigades of sharpshooters. It should be noted that the 6th Siberian Corps is already under Kuropatkin's con-

trol at Mukden, and that, therefore, it is clearly intended to cut down the First Army to rather more handy dimensions. It may be added that, before proceeding to the Far East, the 16th Army Corps is to undergo a change of commanders, General Toponin succeeding General Razgonoff. It is thought that the Second Army may be ready to take the field in January, and already the formation of a Third Army is contemplated, "but it cannot be ready before the spring." Optimism as regards military organisation is a plant of very rapid growth—one which has been known to flourish among ourselves. The fact, however, that one of General Gripenberg's corps is already at the front, while another, the 8th or Odessa Corps, is on the point of starting for the Far East early in October, indicates that, at any rate, the Second Army is likely to materialise at no distant date.



GRAND DUKE NICHOLAS NICOLAIEVITCH.

## CHAPTER LXI.

KOREA—THE RUSSIAN ADVANCE—EFFECT OF THE BATTLE OF LIAO-YANG—RUSSIAN RETIREMENT—JAPANESE PREPARATIONS—JAPAN'S CIVIL WORK IN KOREA—POPULAR AGITATION—REFORMS EFFECTED—HOSTILE NATIVES.

WE have to go back rather a long way in order to pick up that thread of our narrative which has reference to the progress of affairs in the "Hermit Kingdom" of Korea. Since, in Chapter XXX., reference was made to the reported bridging of the Tumen River by the Russians, about the middle of June, nothing has occurred to compel our serious attention in this direction. Nor would it now be necessary to deal very closely with Korea and the Koreans but for the fact that the Battle of Liao-yang has reacted very strongly upon the immediate prospects of this country and people. It may seem a little strange that such a battle should have such an effect. But a brief survey of the facts will soon render the position clear, and, incidentally, some interesting glimpses will be revealed of a curious spectacle—that of a nation, which is a principal bone of contention in a great war, being almost turned inside out and thoroughly reformed, while as yet the end of hostilities is not in sight.

It is useful to remember, and to keep on remembering, the pregnant words with which Mr. Diósy, in his Introduction to this History, dilated upon the extraordinary importance of Korea to Japan. After speaking of the natural wealth of this "distressful" country, and of the manner in which Japan set herself long before the war to develop these neglected

resources, Mr. Diósy remarked that "Japan has thus created for herself in the Korean Empire interests so considerable that they would alone entitle her to a predominant position in that peninsula even if its geographical situation did not make it so vitally important." In detailing, then, as we shall do presently, the progress of the Japonification of Korea, we shall be merely continuing an old story, to which, in this narrative, some contributions have been made in the way of allusions to the construction of the Seoul-Wiju Railway, and to attempted internal reforms.

But it is the warlike pattern interwoven in this fabric of peaceful progress that makes it trebly interesting. For, as we have seen, the fighting possibilities of Korea did not by any means cease with the Battle of the Yalu, and even now there is the prospect that the north-east corner of the "Hermit Kingdom" may prove, if not the objective, the starting point of serious operations. In this narrative the relation of Korea to Vladivostok has always been kept clearly in view. Primarily, of course, the proposition was that Russia would threaten Korea by a descent from Vladivostok along the coast of the Ham-yeng province. But there was the converse possibility that, in due course, the Russian advance in this direction being defeated, or checked, or diverted, the Japanese

would themselves take the same line, working up from Gen-san northwards towards Vladivostok.

In view of the result there is no need to go very closely into the details of the Russian attempted invasion of Korea from Vladivostok. In some quarters it has been suggested that the idea of such an invasion only existed in the imagination of Russian and French journalists. But there is ample evidence to show that the project was a serious one, and that at one time it was gravely hoped that by this means a most useful diversion would be created. A writer in the Russian *Viedomosti*, an important Moscow organ, has not only admitted that an expedition from Vladivostok into Korea formed an important part of Russia's plan of campaign, but has given some interesting details which prove clearly that the end in view was a very definite one, and by no means confined to mere interference with the Japanese occupation. The idea was that, eventually, the expedition should act much as did General Sherman's in the American Civil War, which marched round to the rear of the Confederates, who, pressed by Grant on the north and Sherman on the south, were driven to the sea and compelled to surrender.

The writer in the *Viedomosti* evidently thinks that the expedition was foredoomed to failure from the moment that the Russians lost the command of the Japanese Sea. So no doubt it was, as far as its later developments were concerned. But a properly organised raid on a large scale into Korea might have had important results, notwithstanding the risk of an attack by troops landed in rear. It would seem, too, that the Russian military authorities held this view, for they continued their preparations,

and did not abandon them until long after every vestige of a chance of wresting the command of the sea from Japan had disappeared. What eventually crushed the expedition from Vladivostok into Korea was not the misfortunes of the Port Arthur ships, not the failure of the Vladivostok Squadron, not even the tardiness of the Baltic Fleet in getting to sea, but the Battle of Liao-yang.

After the reported bridging of the Tumen River by the Russians we do not hear much of the movements of the latter until the second week in July, when some adventurous Japanese scouts found the Tumen closely guarded, and a permanent fort in course of construction near Kyeng-Keung on the river's bank. There had previously been a considerable Russian garrison at Hun-chan, some twenty-eight miles north-west of Kyeng-Keung, but this had now been reduced to one battalion, a larger concentration being reported on the shores of Possiet Bay. A little later Russian scouts were reported nearly 150 miles south of the Tumen.

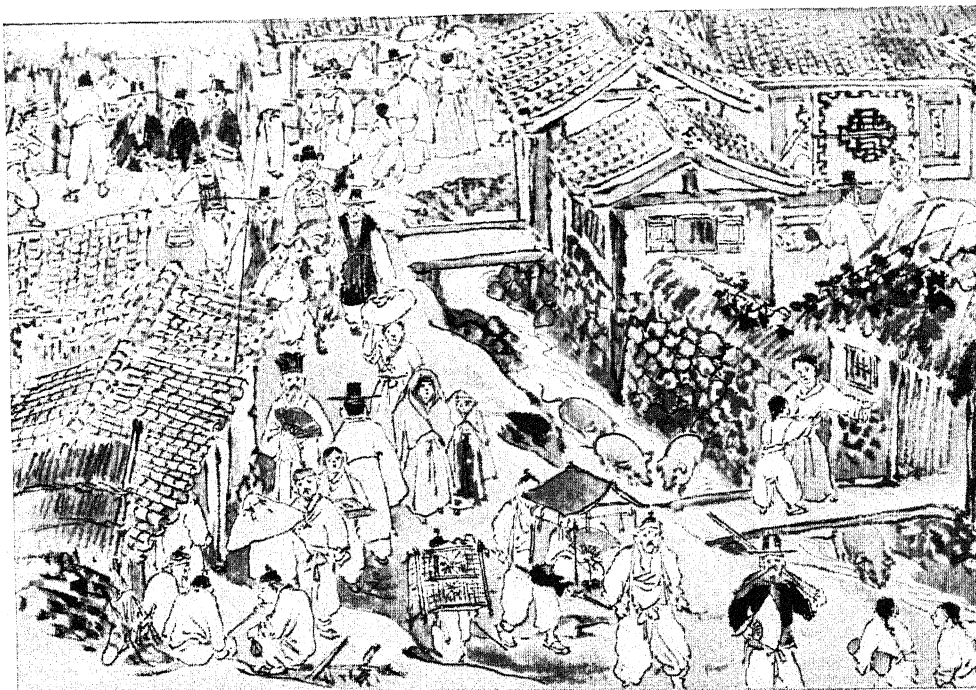
On July 19th a telegram from the Tokio correspondent of the *Times* announced that the Russians in North-east Korea were reported "to be building roads, bridging the Tumen, and otherwise making preparations which suggest the advent of a large force."

Early in August it was stated that the Russians had established a small permanent garrison of 220 men at Kyeng-heung, in addition to strong patrols north, south, and east of that point. Communication with Vladivostok was said to be maintained by torpedo-boats and by telegraph. Twenty Russian engineers with several hundred coolies had reconstructed the road running to the south-west along the Tumen River for about 100 miles as far as the town of Mu-san.



They had also repaired the road to Song-ching (Sin-Chyong), and extended the telegraph to that point. These roads, formerly mere paths, were now nine feet wide. It was added that, as the Russian military control advanced, Russian and Chinese traders followed, resuming the

leaving three dead and taking away seven wounded. There were no Japanese casualties. The incident is interesting, as this is, for the present at any rate, the most southerly collision between the Russians and the Japanese in this quarter, and is rather typical of the whole



*From a Japanese Drawing.*

STREET IN SEOUL.

(From Arthur Diösy's "The New Far East.")

trade interrupted by the outbreak of the war.

On August 4th a detachment of 400 arrived at Ham-yeng, and four days later a scouting party of thirty troopers appeared about three miles north-west of Gen-san, and were immediately driven off by the Japanese. On August 9th, at dawn, 200 Cossacks with machine guns attacked Gen-san, but found the Japanese alert and in superior force. At half-past eight the Cossacks retired,

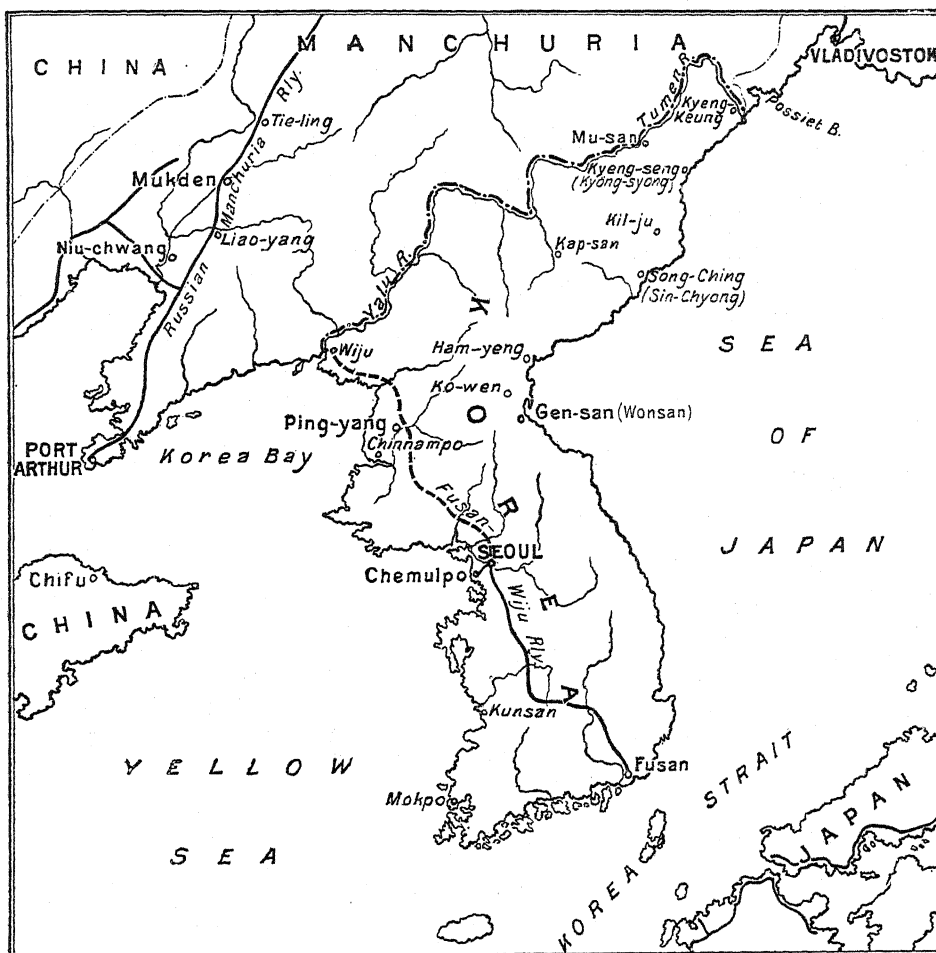
of the proceedings in North-east Korea during the past three months.

On August 4th there were 200 Russians at Ko-wen, only about a dozen miles north-west of Gen-san. The Russians had now, in addition, 500 men at Kyeng-seng (Kyōng-syong), 100 each at Kil-ju and Song-ching, and 2,200 at Ham-yeng, with some Hotchkiss guns.

At the close of August it was reported from Gen-san that numerous Chinese junks were busily transporting military

supplies from Vladivostok to Kyeng-seng, the transportation to the south being effected overland. "The Russian commissariat preparations on this coast," writes the Gen-san correspondent of the

It is at this point that the Battle of Liao-yang (August 28th—September 4th) intervenes with crushing effect as far as the Russian invasion of Korea is concerned. For, telegraphing at the begin-



MAP ILLUSTRATING RUSSIA'S PROJECTED INCURSION INTO KOREA.

*New York Herald*, "foreshadow a long campaign with a large body of troops. The Ham-yeng River still marks the furthest southerly point of the Russian advance in force. Road-repairing and reconnaissance parties only are moving nearer Gen-san."

ning of the second week in September, the above-quoted correspondent says that a column of two thousand Russians with six field-guns has left Ham-yeng, taking the Kap-san road to the north, and leaving a quantity of supplies unprotected at Ham-yeng.

The turn of the tide is not long in coming. By the close of September the Liao-yang victory is having some remarkable results in the "Hermit Kingdom" in the way of increased garrisons and preparations. Telegraphing on the 25th, a Seoul correspondent says that in the last ten days 2,500 troops have arrived at Chemulpo, and that others are expected. The Japanese authorities at Gen-san are collecting 4,000 pack ponies for the use of the army in its advance along the eastern coast towards Vladivostok.

It is not intended in this Chapter to carry the course of events in Korea to a later date than the end of September. It is only necessary, then, to state briefly that by the 25th the advance had already begun. Sixteen hundred Japanese troops, five machine guns, 500 pack ponies, and 400 coolies were reported to have arrived at Ham-yeng. The advanced guard of this force appears to have an unpleasant experience. Some Cossacks had re-occupied the town, and these now fired upon the Japanese, killing ten men and wounding seventeen more. The advance guard was completely surprised, and had to fall back and wait for the main body to come up. At Gen-san the garrison was being reinforced from Seoul and Ping-yang.

Before we turn to the record of civil progress in Korea during the past four months, a few words may usefully be added to what has already been said with reference to these interesting military developments in the north-eastern corner of the country. The more closely one studies the question, the stronger grows the conviction that, if the Battle of Liao-yang had been anything less of a victory than it was, Japan would have found this corner productive of more trouble than any section of the theatre of war, Port

Arthur, of course, excepted. It is true that her communications would not have been seriously menaced, for even the First or Right Army is now so placed that it could, if necessary, change its base. But if Kuropatkin had succeeded in his design of isolating Kuroki, and, even if not victorious, had punished the latter somewhat heavily, the Japanese would have found it extremely inconvenient to stem the Russian irruption into Korea, which would have immediately followed. As things are, the result of the Liao-yang battle has been exactly contrary. The Russian "trek" has been, to use the late Mr. Kruger's historic phrase, "damped," and, instead of the Russians invading Korea, and scattering the good effects of Japanese reforms in civil administration to the winds, the Japanese appear to be on the point of attempting the passage of the Tumen—in other words, of actually invading Russia!

But the alternative which is now disappearing is not without its lesson. And this lesson is that a very big Power in conflict with a comparatively small Power, in a very large theatre of operations, can, even while it is getting the worst of it, exert pressure at unconsidered points, which it may tax the smaller Power heavily to meet. Russia knows this well enough, and, up to a certain point, the pressure exercised upon Gen-san was skilful, and calculated to prove eventually effective. But something of Linievitch's age and caution is reflected in the actual handling of the Russian force, small as it was, in this quarter. A resolute attack on Gen-san by the whole of the Ham-yeng force would probably have resulted in its capture, and in a marked increase of the anti-Japanese feeling among the Koreans. Doubtless the place could not have been held, but

the diversion would have been a useful one, and much more impressive than the ridiculous Cossack failure recorded above.

We have now to consider the steps which Japan, since she assumed a virtual protectorate over Korea, has been taking both to discharge her new responsibilities and to consolidate what is not an altogether satisfactory position. The importance of such a survey is great even from the military standpoint. Although the main interest of the war has now been shifted to Manchuria, although for the present the idea of a Russian invasion of Korea has evaporated, Japan cannot by any means afford to take it for granted that the country will not again become the scene of serious hostilities. As we know, she has taken adequate precautions on the banks of the Yalu ; she has an important depôt at Ping-yang ; the future Seoul-Wiju Railway will be a valuable aid to any possible, if improbable, frontier operations ; and on the north-east side preparations are apparently being made for taking an offensive which is not likely to be checked, at any rate south of the Tumen. But in a peninsula like Korea frontiers are not everything. Moreover, there must be Japanese statesmen who realise that, although there is no present prospect that Japan will ever lose the command of her seas, there is always the bare chance that some day Russia, with assistance, might contrive to land a force in Korea such as could only with difficulty be dealt with by a country whose resources have been sapped, and whose army has been enfeebled, by the strain of perhaps some years of constant and exhausting warfare.

Of course, at the bottom of all these reflections lies the simple fact that Korea is a prize very well worth striving for. In competent hands it is a region capable

of producing not only far more than would be required in the way of supplies for a largely increased population, but also an important revenue. Herein, perhaps, lies the greatest danger of Japan, a danger which, we may be sure, she thoroughly understands. Even if she can keep Korea, practically speaking, for herself, she is hardly in a position—and at the end of the war may be still less in a position—to develop the resources of the country without foreign assistance. She is not like England, which can lend a Colony twenty or thirty millions without any appreciable effort. Later on, the conversion of Korea from a semi-barbaric Sleepy Hollow into an up-to-date centre of commercial and industrial activity will require large capital and enterprise, and for this Japan, with all her glowing energy and boundless ambition, will have to depend largely upon the foreigner. But the foreigner who puts capital and enterprise into what is to all intents and purposes a new nation wants one of two things, in addition to a handsome return upon his outlay. He wants either a good working administrative system which will protect him and his business interests, or the chance of taking a hand himself in the management of the country, with a view to realising his own ideals in the way of Government assistance for himself and Government discouragement for everyone else.

Now, of course, this is the very last thing which would suit Japan. Self-confidence is the salient feature of the Japanese character, and we may take it that sooner or later Korea is intended to be an exemplar of Japanese administrative capacity to the rest of the civilised world. There is nothing very presumptuous in this idea. Japan herself has achieved

wonders in a quarter of a century, and, what is more to the point, she has attained a really remarkable success in Formosa, which fell into her hands after the war with China. But it is essential to the proper working of her methods that she should enjoy absolute freedom from interference. In the early stages of the development of her navy and army she had to seek foreign advice and adopt foreign models. But at the earliest possible moment she discarded the advice wholly, and, to some extent, the models also; and, so far, has had no cause for regret. Whether she can safely ignore foreign counsels in the future government of such "kittle cattle" as the Koreans is another matter; but it is evident that she intends making the experiment, and is quite confident as to the result.

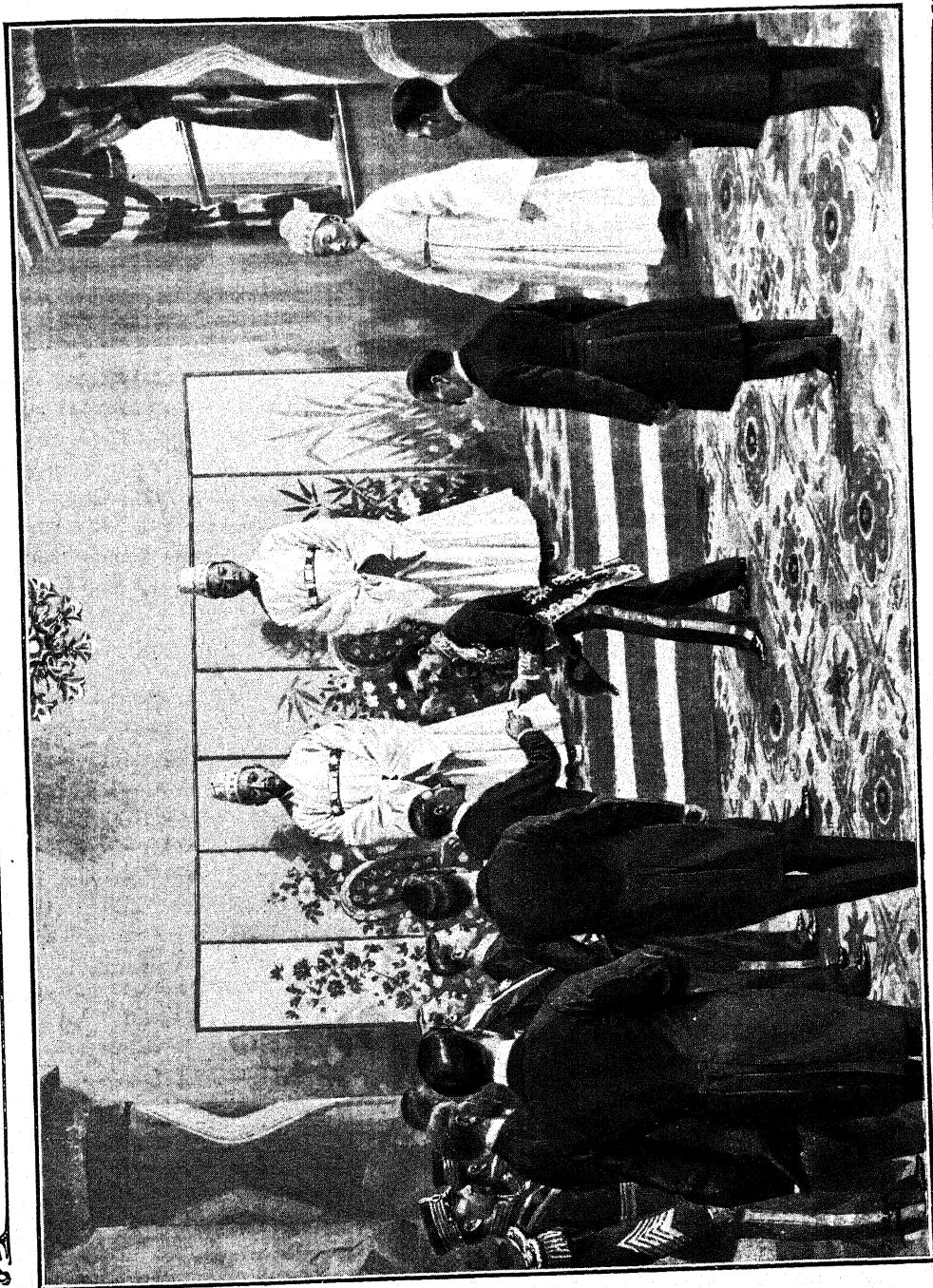
We see, then, Japan actuated by a double motive in her actions with regard to the—shall we say civilisation?—of Korea. In the first place, a settled country with a large admixture of Japanese immigrants will afford far greater facilities for any future military movements or dispositions than did the Korea of last February. Secondly, if foreign assistance has subsequently to be sought in the opening up of the great stores of mineral and other wealth which are here available, it will be procured at far less cost, and dispensed with far sooner, if the civil administration is working smoothly, if peace and order reign throughout the land, and if there are productive public works to offer as security for loans.

Unfortunately Japan, in regard to Korea, labours under two disadvantages. The first is her own attitude, or rather that of the average Japanese individual, towards Asiatics and, above all, towards Chinamen and Koreans. There is no

doubt that the Japanese in general are extraordinarily overbearing where these two races are concerned, and doubtless they are, to some extent, justified in regarding the bulk of the inhabitants of the Celestial and Hermit Kingdoms from a standpoint of contemptuous superiority. But it is a grave question whether in the long run it is the best policy to treat the Oriental, whether Mongol or Aryan, in this fashion. We do not find it so in India, where our experience has been not only uniquely wide, but also uniquely successful. Of course, occasionally, the pride, or rather the arrogance, of race improperly asserts itself; but, on the whole, the relations between the British and the natives in India are admirably balanced on a give-and-take basis. It is the same with Russia in Central Asia. The Russians would never have attained such results as they undoubtedly have attained in Turkestan if they had not cemented their military achievements by the display of a very skilful regard for the susceptibilities of the queerly constituted races now under their protection.

It may be that an Asiatic cannot safely apply to another Asiatic the same rules of forbearance and consideration that are expedient in the case of a European who wants a native of India, or of China, or of one of the Central Asian khanates, to render him willing, loyal, and efficient service. But it is at least questionable whether the Japanese have not yet to learn an important lesson in this respect, and whether their present failure to comprehend the need of such a lesson may not in the end prove a costly one.

A second disability against which the Japanese have to contend is the character of the Koreans themselves, a subject which was dealt with as far back as Chapter XI. of this history. Even in the



EUROPEAN NEWSPAPER CORRESPONDENTS BEING PRESENTED TO THE KOREAN EMPEROR.

early days of the war it was clear that the Koreans were by no means entirely grateful to the Japanese for their benevolent intervention in Korean affairs. As the campaign has progressed, and Japan's intentions with regard to reforms in the civil administration have become manifest, distrust and suspicion have deepened; while naturally, where vested interests have been threatened, active opposition has been aroused. It is quite a mistake to suppose that liberal payment for military supplies and labour is sufficient to neutralise animosities of this sort in a country in which indolence, ignorance, and corruption flourish to such an extent as they do in Korea. Moreover, of late, another class besides the Korean official and the Korean coolie has had reason to deplore the intervention of the Japanese. This is well brought out in an interesting letter from the correspondent of the *Standard* on board the *Manchu Maru*, the passengers on which were taken to Seoul in the course of their memorable tour. "In almost every town of any importance," writes this correspondent under date July 18th, "you will find that the best of the smelling, muddy lanes which pass for streets have been bought up by the enterprising Japanese trader, whose stall at once supplants that of the Korean. In every town, if you want to stop the night, the only possible habitation is the Japanese tea-house, which makes its appearance directly a few settlers from the Land of the Gods have taken up a permanent residence. Here you will find comfort, cleanliness, good food, and attendance—a veritable oasis in the midst of the surrounding squalor and filth. The Korean sees with dismay the Japanese settler ousting him, slowly but surely, from his former trades and monopolies. . . .

Unfortunately, the character of the Japanese settlers is not all that could be desired. Like the pioneers of most new countries, the Japanese, directly he removes from the influence of his home surroundings, ceases to lead a life compatible with the civilisation of the country to which he belongs. In Korea he often behaves in a way that disconcerts his fellow countrymen . . . not always being over honest in his dealings with the natives. This," adds the *Standard* correspondent, confirming strangely what has been said above, "combined with the naturally arrogant and somewhat overbearing Japanese character, especially when brought into touch with other Oriental races, is responsible for the growing dislike of the Koreans for the Japanese."

The writer just quoted speaks elsewhere of the Korean's fatuous belief in the "power and sanctity" of his country. It is an interesting coincidence that, while these impressions were being committed to paper on board the *Manchu Maru*—which had then proceeded on her voyage—events should have been taking place at Seoul sharply indicative of the Korean's suspicious objections to the Japanese, and their fear lest the latter might have designs upon the "integrity" of the kingdom. An ex-Japanese official, Mr. Nagamori, had conceived the idea of applying for a waste-land concession in Korea, and had calmly asked for a fifty years' lease of all unutilised moors and other lands in the peninsula, except such as belonged to the Throne or served for burial or religious purposes. It is expressly stated by the *Times* correspondent in Tokio that the Japanese Government had not originally been connected with the Nagamori Syndicate. "That they approved of the project is tolerably certain, since it would have simultane-



ously enriched Korea and opened a convenient source of food supply for Japan. But they did not support it officially, or interfere in any way," until afterwards. In the first instance the Japanese representative at Seoul merely presented the application in the ordinary course of routine.

The result was impressive. "Many Koreans," says the *Times* correspondent, "are still disposed to sit on the fence between Japan and Russia; the events of the war have not yet convinced them. Many others are distinctly pro-Russian. Both of these classes, the waverers and the Russophiles, regarded, or pretended to regard, the Nagamori proposition as a sinister design upon the territorial integrity of their country. A clique of agitators—many of them thoroughly honest no doubt—was quickly organised under the name of the 'peace-preservation party,' and by menace or persuasion they induced the Court not only to assist them with money, but also to sanction the formation of a native company which should itself be the nominal recipient of the very concession sought by the Nagamori Syndicate."

Here was a pretty kettle of fish! No sort of doubt existed as to the violence of the commotion created, or the reality of the feelings aroused. The Korean officials were powerless to cope with the situation, and in Seoul itself a body of rioters, 2,000 strong, assembled and refused to disperse although ordered to do so by the Emperor himself. The intervention of the Japanese troops was necessary before tranquillity could be restored.

It is characteristic of Japanese smartness that it was found possible to turn even this incident to advantage. The first step of the Japanese Minister at Seoul was to issue a proclamation stating

that, in consequence of the recent disturbances, the Japanese would assume the police power in all matters affecting Japanese interests, and that in future no anti-Japanese meetings would be allowed.

Finding itself forced by the organisation of the bogus native company to intervene on the question of the waste-land concession, the Japanese Government had little difficulty in arranging a compromise. The concession granted, or about to be granted, to the native company was knocked on the head, and the application of the Nagamori Syndicate was understood to have been favourably considered "in principle." At the same time, in view of the popular clamour on the subject, the application was to be regarded as in abeyance for the present. Thus ended an incident which, if it did nothing else, served to show that, in attempting internal reforms in Korea, Japan has almost as hard a task in an administrative sense as she has strategically and tactically in Manchuria and before Port Arthur.

Japan's next step was to lay before the Emperor of Korea a detailed scheme of reforms containing some thirty items, of which a few may usefully be mentioned. It was suggested that advisers recommended by Japan should be appointed to the Departments of Finance and Foreign Affairs; that the Japanese Minister should be privileged at any time to have audience of the Emperor without the intermediary services of the Korean Foreign Minister; that the Korean Army should be reduced to a bodyguard of 1,000 men; that the Japanese currency should be adopted; that all Korean Ministers and Consuls in foreign countries should be recalled, and Korean interests placed in charge of Japanese Ministers and Consuls; and that official corruption should be rigorously suppressed.

This scheme was submitted by Mr. Hayashi, the Japanese Minister at Seoul, on August 12th, and ten days later an agreement was signed with regard to the serious question of foreign and financial advisers. The Korean Government agreed to engage as financial adviser a Japanese subject recommended by Japan, whose counsel should be taken in all matters of finance. It further agreed to engage as diplomatic adviser a foreigner recommended by Japan, whose counsel should be taken in all important matters concerning foreign relations. The last paragraph of this noteworthy agreement was as follows: "The Korean Government shall consult the Japanese Government before concluding treaties or conventions with foreign Powers, and in dealing with other important diplomatic affairs, such as the granting of concessions to, or contracts with, foreigners."

In accordance with the above agreement Mr. Megata, "one of the ablest among the junior members of the Japanese Treasury," was chosen for the post of Financial Adviser to the Korean Government. An excellent Diplomatic Adviser was forthcoming in an American, Mr. D. W. Stevens, for many years Secretary of the United States Legation in Tokio, and now Counsellor to the Japanese Legation in Washington.

About the same time that the above agreement was entered into the Japanese are said to have obtained a monopoly of the fishery rights on the Korean coast, and to have induced the Korean Government to cancel the concession made to Russia for the exploitation of the vast forests in the region of the Ya-lu and Tumen Rivers. The timber concession in question had a good deal to do with the outbreak of the present war. For

it was taken over in a very paternal sort of way by the Russian Government, and made the pretext for various acts of aggression, against which the Japanese protested vainly until they backed up their arguments with the torpedo and the bayonet.

Japan now proceeded to turn her attention to the extension of the railway system. At the commencement of the war there was only one short line running from Seoul to the port of Chemulpo. Thanks to the energy of the Japanese military engineers, railway communication between Seoul and Wi-ju on the Yalu was now, practically speaking, an accomplished fact. In the first week of September a railway between Fusan and Ma-san-po was begun, and seemed likely to be continued to Seoul. About the middle of the same month we heard that Mr. Hayashi had recommended the construction, as a commercial venture, of yet a new line between Seoul and Gensan. There is an important future, one would imagine, for such an extension on military as well as commercial grounds, and it goes without saying that, with all the more important Korean railways completely under Japanese control, Japan would be able, if necessary, to exercise an altogether exclusive influence upon the future development of the country. At the same time there were not wanting signs of Korean opposition to this policy. During September the Japanese found it necessary to execute three Koreans whom they caught in the act of wrecking property on the new Seoul-Wi-ju line, and who were found to be in the pay of Russian sympathisers.

At the end of September it was reported that the Bank of Japan, which is officially connected with the Tokio Finance Department, was establishing

branches in important towns throughout Korea. Thus Japan in two or three months had successively attacked the question of Korea's civil administration, her diplomatic relations, her trade and industries, her railways, and her public and private finance. Such a performance in such circumstances is unique, and the somewhat close attention we have given the subject is surely justified on the ground that here we have one of the most remarkable side-issues of a war, still in active progress, which has ever been chronicled in history.

Will the Japanese succeed in this astonishing endeavour? If energy and enterprise, and apparent sincerity of purpose, can effect what is desired, no doubt they will. But it will be an uphill task, infinitely more troublesome than was that which Japan had to face in effecting her own emancipation from the semi-barbarism of her former state. Even in the month to the close of which we have

brought this rapid survey there are continued indications of Korean pig-headedness and reluctance to be civilised at any price. At the gate of the Emperor's Palace Korean petitioners kneel in the old Korean way, praying the Emperor to adopt a strong anti-Japanese policy. The Emperor declines to accept memorials, the Japanese police arrest the petitioners, yet the latter "continue the exercise fearlessly." Even in the country the anti-Japanese feeling flourishes. In the north, it is said, "another secret society" has been formed by Russophil Koreans "with the object of becoming affiliated to the Tonghaks and lending assistance to the Russian advance." There are two ways of dealing with fractious children. Japan has tried, is still trying, one. If she be compelled to try the other, one fears that there are troublous times in store for the Hermit Kingdom and its blindly foolish inhabitants.



THE "WAR OFFICE," SEOUL.  
(By permission from "Koreans at Home.")

## CHAPTER LXII.

RUSSIA AND GERMANY—JAPAN'S SUSPICIONS—IRRITATION IN GREAT BRITAIN—GERMANY'S  
 FAR EASTERN INTERESTS—AN OSTENTATIOUS NEUTRALITY—THE *TIMES* STATEMENT—  
 FRENCH NEWS—PRACTICAL SYMPATHY.

IT will be remembered that when, in the second week of July, the 85th (Wiborg) Regiment of the Russian Army was ordered to the Far East (see Chapter XXXVII., Vol. I, p. 448), its Colonel-in-Chief, the German Emperor, addressed to it a somewhat remarkable telegram of congratulation and encouragement. Even in Berlin this message was regarded as a "demonstration too friendly in the manner of its expression not to deserve criticism." In St. Petersburg it first raised glowing hopes of German intervention in the conflict, but further comments on these lines were promptly, and doubtless authoritatively, suppressed. In Tokio the message was treated jocosely, but there is little question that it was regarded with some seriousness. In other quarters the opinion was freely expressed that the German Emperor had gone a good deal further than was necessary or desirable to emphasise his evident wish for Russia's success.

Some time before this unfortunate message was put on the wires Japan had begun to entertain pretty definite suspicions of Germany's partiality for Russia, and it is not surprising that, in the wake of these suspicions, marked resentment should have followed. It was not exactly soothing to Japan to learn that, in the words of the correspondent of the *Paris Matin*, the German Embassy in St. Petersburg was "as busy as a newspaper office," every member of the staff being

engaged in the collection of news and rumours, and the minutest details being despatched daily to the Kaiser, "who immediately sends his congratulations, or condolences and wreaths." It is true that in St. Petersburg it was clearly understood that the German people did not entirely share their impulsive Sovereign's Russophil sentiments. But it was hardly to be expected that Tokio would discriminate very carefully between well-restrained Japanese sympathies of an unknown section of the German public and the open friendliness of the German Emperor for Japan's great and deadly enemy.

It soon became evident, moreover, that, whether sympathetic or not, there were plenty of Germans ready to render Russia very practical assistance by sailing quite close to the wind in regard to neutral obligations. We have already discussed in a previous chapter the actual legality of the sales by Germany to Russia of large merchant vessels, which the latter can, and does, convert forthwith into "third-class cruisers." It is understood that this practice does not contravene the international laws of war, and, accordingly, the conduct of Germany in this respect cannot be fairly called in question. At the same time, if one nation acts in a very unfriendly way towards another, the mere fact that the laws of neutrality have not been actually infringed does not prevent that other nation from feeling sore.

It has also been pointed out in the course of this narrative that the apparent existence of a bond of sympathy between Russia and Germany has aroused a good deal of irritation in this country. When the excitement created by the performances of the Volunteer cruisers and the Vladivostok Squadron in regard to neutral shipping was at its height, it was not only felt, but pretty openly remarked, that the injury done to the commerce of Great Britain was attended by singular advantages to our German rivals. Putting aside the question whether German shipping did or did not suffer in the same proportion as ours did from the lawless behaviour of Russian naval officers, the fact remained that freights to the Far East were accepted for German vessels at a much lower rate of insurance than for English ones. The discontinuance, moreover, by several English steamship lines of their services to Japan meant an advantage to German companies, which would hardly have been conceded to them had British owners been convinced that in the Far East there was still a fair field and no favour for all neutral vessels.

We shall presently go a little more closely into the question whether these suspicions on the part of Japan, and this irritation on the part of ourselves, were justified. But in the meantime it will be well to say a few words as to the possible reasons for Germany's anxiety to stand well with her Eastern neighbour in regard to the struggle for supremacy in the Far East. It will be necessary, perhaps, to speak somewhat plainly on this subject; but the facts are not seriously in dispute, and in drawing a few simple inferences from them we need not display a tithe of the partiality which Germany has so often manifested in commenting upon British policy and methods.

For some years past it has been Germany's dream to become an Asiatic Power, and, ever since her occupation of Kiao-chau she has lost no opportunity of developing in the great Chinese province of Shan-tung a position similar to that which Russia formerly occupied in Manchuria. Writing about the middle of July—with reference, by the way, to the German Emperor's telegram to the Wiborg Regiment—Dr. George Morrison, the *Times* correspondent at Peking, makes the following significant observations:—"In Europe even yet you fail to realise how great has been the energy devoted by Germany to the Germanisation of the province of Shan-tung. Long ago she secured practical railway and mining monopolies throughout the entire province. The weak, old Governor plays into her hands. She has an extensive postal system, and has even refused to carry the Imperial Chinese mails on the German trains. There are more than 500 German officials and civilians scattered through the province. In Tsinanfu, the capital, for example, there is a German infantry instructor, a German Supervisor of the Construction of Roads, a German professor in the Shan-tung Provincial College, a German postmaster, a German Consul, a German Chancellor, a German oculist, besides business men, hotel-keepers, railway *employés*, and mining engineers. In the Customs at Kiao-chau there is an exclusively German staff, and the name of every *employé* has to be submitted first by Sir Robert Hart to the German Governor for approval."

It does not require much insight to understand that Japan's supremacy in the Far East might be a serious bar to the development of these substantial and growing interests. In the first place, Japan is fighting in the present instance

not only on account of Korea, but also, to some extent, as the champion of the integrity of China. Assuming that she succeeds in turning Russia out of Manchuria, it is not at all inconceivable that her next step would be directed against the expulsion of Germany from Shantung.

A moment's reflection will show that, in any such event as this, Germany's position would be one of humiliating impotence. It is all very well to talk of Germany's mailed fist when a nation like China is concerned, but with a possibly hostile Japan the case is altogether different. It is quite true that Germany is not only stronger than Japan on land, but has a larger navy. But Germany's land forces are of comparatively little use to her in the Far East, with which she has not, as Russia has, any land communication. As for her Navy, it is true that she has twelve modern battleships, admirably officered and manned, but it is a grave question whether she would care to send out in any case even half of these to the Far East. Even supposing she sent them all, the problem of coaling, which has not yet been satisfactorily solved in the case of the Russian Baltic Fleet, would have to be faced. Lastly, if trouble arose between Germany and Japan, after the latter had gained possession of both Port Arthur and Vladivostok, the question of a Far Eastern naval base for Germany would be a difficult one. As a matter of course, Japan would blockade, if she did not capture, Kiao-chau (Tsingtau), and Germany could hardly expect either Great Britain or France to allow her warships to make a convenience of their harbours. Germany would therefore be compelled to rest her chances on a Fleet action at sea, and, unless she emerged from this more completely vic-

torious than it would seem wise for her to expect, she would have no more chance of hurting Japan than a tiger has of catching a skylark. Not only this, but almost in any case the damage done to her trade with China would be terrific.

It has been necessary to put this matter somewhat crudely, not in the least with a view to fomenting anti-German sentiment, but merely by way of a common-sense explanation of the German attitude. A very ordinary error into which the British public has fallen with regard to the friendly feeling evinced by Germany for Russia during the war in the Far East is a failure to appreciate the existence of German interests and ambitions in China, interests and ambitions which of themselves command some sort of admiration if not of respect. Whether a nation, whatever it may stand to gain or lose, is justified in playing such a part as Germany has played in this case is one thing; whether such a policy as Germany's is likely to prove in the long run a safe one is another. But it is idle to ignore the fact that Germany's temptation was a strong one, and that the situation appealed with special force to the German Emperor and those who, like himself, had strained every nerve to gain a foothold for Germany in the Far East, and were eager to see some early return for the expenditure of money and energy incurred.

At the same time, while it was clearly to Germany's interest that Japan should not emerge from her struggle with Russia so completely victorious that her supremacy in the Far East would be, practically speaking, assured, there were certain other considerations which made it necessary for, at any rate, the German Government to exhibit great caution. Probably the last thing in the world which



RUSSIAN CRUISER STOPPING A CONTRABAND STEAMER ON THE HIGH SEAS.



Germany wanted was to become herself embroiled in the war. There is no man living who understands what sea-power means better than the German Emperor, and the fact that any overt act of hostility against Japan on the part of Germany would necessarily bring the British Navy on the scene, must have been considered by such an authority in every possible aspect. Putting aside, however, a contingency which it would not be good taste to discuss in detail, Germany was obliged to reckon to some extent with the force of public opinion, not only on the Continent, but in the United States. Powerful as she is she cannot afford to disregard, as Russia has habitually disregarded, the very strong views which highly civilised nations now take when international laws are too rudely slighted. The rôle which Germany has so greatly enjoyed playing, that of the "honest broker," would become impossible if her honesty became too obviously fly-blown. Accordingly, she has now to "walk delicately," as regards her avowed diplomacy, and, above all, her outward observance of the laws of neutrality must be such as to enable her to pose before the whole world as a model of studious impartiality.

When, therefore, after the naval action of August 10th, certain Russian ships sought refuge at Tsing-Tau, Germany's attitude was almost fussily correct. There were not wanting unkind critics to suggest that the German authorities at Tsing-Tau had anticipated the arrival of some portion of the Port Arthur Fleet, and had considerably made arrangements for coaling with the utmost despatch such vessels as might be able to take the sea again. This, it will be remembered, was actually done in the case of the *Novik*, which managed to coal

and get away within the twenty-four hours' time limit. The remaining ships, however, were so knocked about that escape was hopeless, and in these circumstances the German authorities had no option but to dismantle them and intern their crews. This was done with much ceremony, it being doubtless expected that the world would be suitably impressed by the spectacle. As a matter of fact, it would have been extremely risky for Germany to have failed in her obvious duty on this occasion. Such a flagrant breach of neutrality would, surely, have been tantamount to an act of war against Japan, and the latter would have been clearly justified in appealing—as she had threatened in such an event to do—to the terms of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. Whether Germany is as yet anxious to pit her newly-formed Navy—admirably efficient and powerful as it is—against the fleets of Great Britain is open to question. But the fact remains that, if Germany had not behaved as she did towards the Russian ships in Tsing-Tau Harbour, she would have incurred the prompt and, perhaps, dangerous resentment of Japan; would have stood convicted before the world of a shameless breach of the laws of nations, and might have had to fight Japan's ally. The proud references, therefore, of the German Press to the "scrupulously conscientious manner" in which Germany "performed her duty as a neutral Power at Tsing-Tau" have not any very grave historical or other value.

The prevailing doubt as to the absolute soundness of German neutrality found expression in various ways, and on September 14th the *Times* published as "From a Correspondent" an article in which the existence of a "Far Eastern Understanding" between Russia and

Germany was alleged with singular force, and with aid of several striking examples. Apart from the suggestion that the Germans at Tsing-Tau would gladly have assisted the crippled Russian war-ships, if they could have done so without incurring the odium of the civilised world, other instances were quoted in which the friendliness of Germany towards her Eastern neighbour seems to have been pleasingly demonstrated. Thus, it was remarked by this plain-spoken correspondent that, at the outset, "the German Emperor took the initiative by proffering to the Tsar explicit assurances of support, amounting to a practical guarantee of immunity from all danger of interference in Europe, which enabled the Russian War Office not only to withdraw from the western provinces of the Empire some of its finest troops of all arms for service in the Far East, but even to dismantle to some extent the western fortresses, in order to provide siege guns for Port Arthur, Vladivostok, Liao-yang, and Harbin.

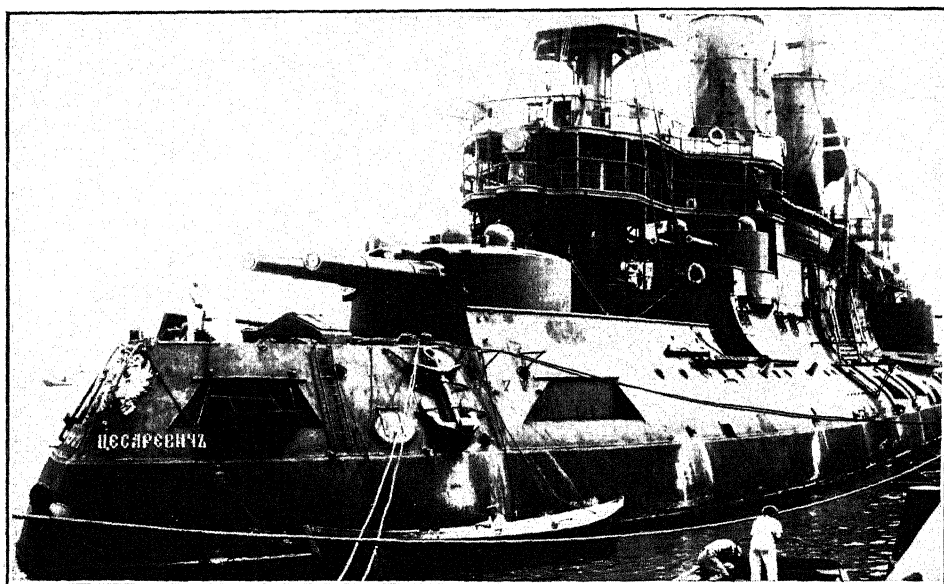
"This spontaneous demonstration of German friendship was followed by a variety of smaller services, down to the arrest and surrender to Russia of deserters who had escaped across the German frontier. Every facility was given for the execution of Russian contracts for war material at Essen and in other German workshops more or less directly controlled by the German Government. The two great German shipping companies, the North-German Lloyd and the Hamburg-America, were allowed to transfer several of their ocean steamers to Russia to be converted into cruisers, and to enter into large contracts for coaling Russian cruisers on their commerce-destroying errands, as well as the Baltic fleet on its way out to the Far East, if circumstances

allowed of its despatch. It has even been stated that torpedo-boats from Schichau have been transported in sections across the German frontier. When, owing to excesses of zeal that are probably inevitable in such circumstances, one or two ships were sunk or seized by Russian cruisers which turned out to be not British but German ships, the German Government, instead of entering vigorous protests and mobilising the semi-official Press against Russia, as it did in 1900 against England after the seizure of the *Bundesrath*, confined itself to the most gentle remonstrances in St. Petersburg, and furnished its organs at home with all manner of explanations and assurances in order to minimise the importance of these incidents."

The conclusions arrived at by this clearly well-informed as well as fearless critic of Germany's "most benevolent and elastic" neutrality accorded pretty closely with the ideas advanced in the earlier part of this chapter. After hinting that Germany had already in July obtained important concessions in a new commercial treaty with Russia, it was observed that William II. "is apparently no less confident than the most sanguine of Russians that Russia will ultimately wear out Japan, and that sooner or later she is bound to become the predominant Power in Eastern Asia. As it is also his *idée fixe* that in Eastern Asia lies the best and largest field for the expansion of German influence beyond the seas, from the base which Germany has already acquired in Shan-tung, the present juncture has been eminently favourable for laying down the lines upon which German and Russian interests may be promoted in the Far East with the least prospect of ulterior friction. It would be rash to assume that the understanding now es-

tablished between Germany and Russia is confined altogether to the Far East ; but it may safely be asserted that it secures for Russia Germany's support in the ultimate settlement of the terms of peace with Japan, and for Germany, as far as Russia is concerned, a free hand in the future for carrying out her scheme of *Welt-politik* on the lines of least resistance in China—i.e. where it will come

anecdote concerning German diplomatic methods with reference to Press statements and contradictions. It was in Bismarck's time, and Prince Gortchakoff was discussing a more than usually audacious statement evidently issued from the Wilhelmstrasse in Berlin. Another diplomatist, knowing full well that there was little love lost between the old Russian Chancellor and the old German Chancel-



THE RUSSIAN BATTLESHIP TSAREVITCH AFTER THE FIGHT OFF PORT ARTHUR, AUGUST 10.

The "Tsarevitch" put into Kinchau in a badly battered condition. Her rudder-shaft was broken, one gun disabled, the lifeboat lost, the masts bent, and the bridge twisted, while the holes above the water-line had to be plugged with makeshift stoppers of wood.

into contact only with British interests." Of course, the German Press was very angry with the *Times* for giving currency to this frank statement, and *démentis* were forthcoming in plenty. Unfortunately, the semi-official organs seemed to be chiefly concerned in contradicting statements never made in the *Times* nor elsewhere in this country. This circumstance moved the writer in the *Times* to relate in a subsequent article an amusing

lor, ventured to observe :—" *Le fait est qu'on sait joliment mentir à Berlin.*" Prince Gortchakoff promptly rebuked this undiplomatic abruptness of speech. "*Pas de gros mots, je vous en prie, cher ami. Disons plutôt qu'on sait joliment démentir à Berlin!*" Apparently, as the *Times* writer remarked, the art of *démentis* is still practised in the German capital, but it is no longer "a fine art."

This almost historic indictment, and the

ponderous attempts to quash it which followed, have a serious bearing upon the history of the war. The one opened many eyes to the existence of tremendous

heart so clearly anxious to propitiate one of the two belligerent Powers.

In October two circumstances combined to foster the growth of the latter senti-



*Photo: C. Schaarwachter.*

THE GERMAN EMPEROR.

possibilities arising out of the restless anxiety of the German Emperor to Teutonise the greater portion of the world's surface; the other increased in several quarters the distrust of a Government so elaborately correct in its attitude, yet at

ment. When it became known that in the new Second Army, the formation of which was dealt with in Chapter LX., the Warsaw Army Corps might be included, considerable surprise was expressed in France that Russia should feel

that she could without danger withdraw her troops from the Polish frontier for the purpose of a Far Eastern campaign. The St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Petit Parisien* accordingly sought an explanation from a diplomatic source, and received an illuminating reply. This was to the effect that the German Government had given an assurance that "no complication would take place through its fault on the Polish frontier during the present war, and that Russia, if she thought proper to do so, could, in case of need, employ the picked troops quartered in that territory." Here we have a striking confirmation from an independent source of the hint already given by the writer in the *Times* above quoted. It may be added that, when the correspondent of the *Petit Parisien* asked whether this active friendliness on the part of Germany would not affect the Franco-Russian alliance, the diplomatist referred to replied: "Certainly not. But I ought to tell you that the German party is daily gaining ground here, and you will see that at the end of the war Germany will obtain numerous advantages as a reward for her attitude during the painful adventure in which Russia is engaged."

The other circumstance to which allusion is intended is the arrangement made for the coaling of the Baltic Fleet. It is necessary for us, in particular, to clear our minds of cant in respect to this transaction. We must remember that our merchants have not hesitated to supply many thousands of tons of coal which they knew perfectly well were destined for use on Russian warships. Up to a certain point Germany was as much entitled as we were to make a profit out of the urgent requirements of either of the two belligerents, provided that the laws

of neutrality were not violated. Nor had we, on the face of things, any more right to connect the German Emperor with the remarkably comprehensive plan adopted for the coaling of Russian warships at sea from German colliers than we had to suggest that the Cardiff merchants were being encouraged to sell coals for Russian use by the British Government. It is essential in such matters to be fair, and to admit that in some cases where private interests could be served, in other words, where large profits could be made, by disregarding both national sentiment and international law, Great Britain's commercial record may not have been absolutely spotless.

But it may reasonably be urged that in this matter of coaling the Baltic Fleet the Germans have touched a point far beyond any hitherto reached by this or any other great Power. It is, perhaps, not too much to say that, had it not been for this system organised by German contractors, the Baltic Fleet would never have left the Baltic for the Far East. Russian warships had been by proclamation forbidden to coal at British ports, and it is quite certain that no British steamship owners would have cared to incur the odium of having made the voyage of the Baltic squadron possible. It is much to be doubted whether any other country possessing the necessary facilities would have concluded such a contract as that now entered into by German ship-owners. For in such cases, where publicity cannot be avoided, the force of public opinion, to say nothing of Government disapproval, tacit or expressed, must count for a good deal. It is quite easy to say that the German Government and the German people strongly objected to a display of commercial enterprise which was obviously tantamount to assisting Russia

in the most practical fashion possible to get the better of Japan. But would anyone attach much importance to any such proposition?

The sum of the matter is that, up to the sailing of the Baltic Fleet, at any rate, Germany, no doubt, has preserved her neutrality inviolate as far as strictly legal and public obligations are concerned. But it would be idle to suggest that her Sovereign and her mercantile

community have not displayed a sympathy with Russia which has at times appeared to take a very practical shape. It is possible that this may seriously affect the progress of the present war. In any case, it can no more be forgotten, nor disregarded, from the historical standpoint, than Germany's co-operation with Russia in ousting Japan from Port Arthur, and her subsequent rather remarkable acquisition of Kiao-chau.



MO-TIEN-LING PASS, WITH THE RUSSIAN POSITIONS IN THE DISTANCE.

*General Keller was killed on the slope of the distant mountain.*

## CHAPTER LXIII.

THE BALTIC FLEET—RUSSIAN SHIP-BUILDING CONDITIONS—PROBLEMS OF THE ROUTE—  
ADMIRAL ROZHDESTVENSKY ASSUMES COMMAND—A TRIAL CRUISE—COMPOSITION OF  
THE SQUADRON—NERVOUS FEARS.

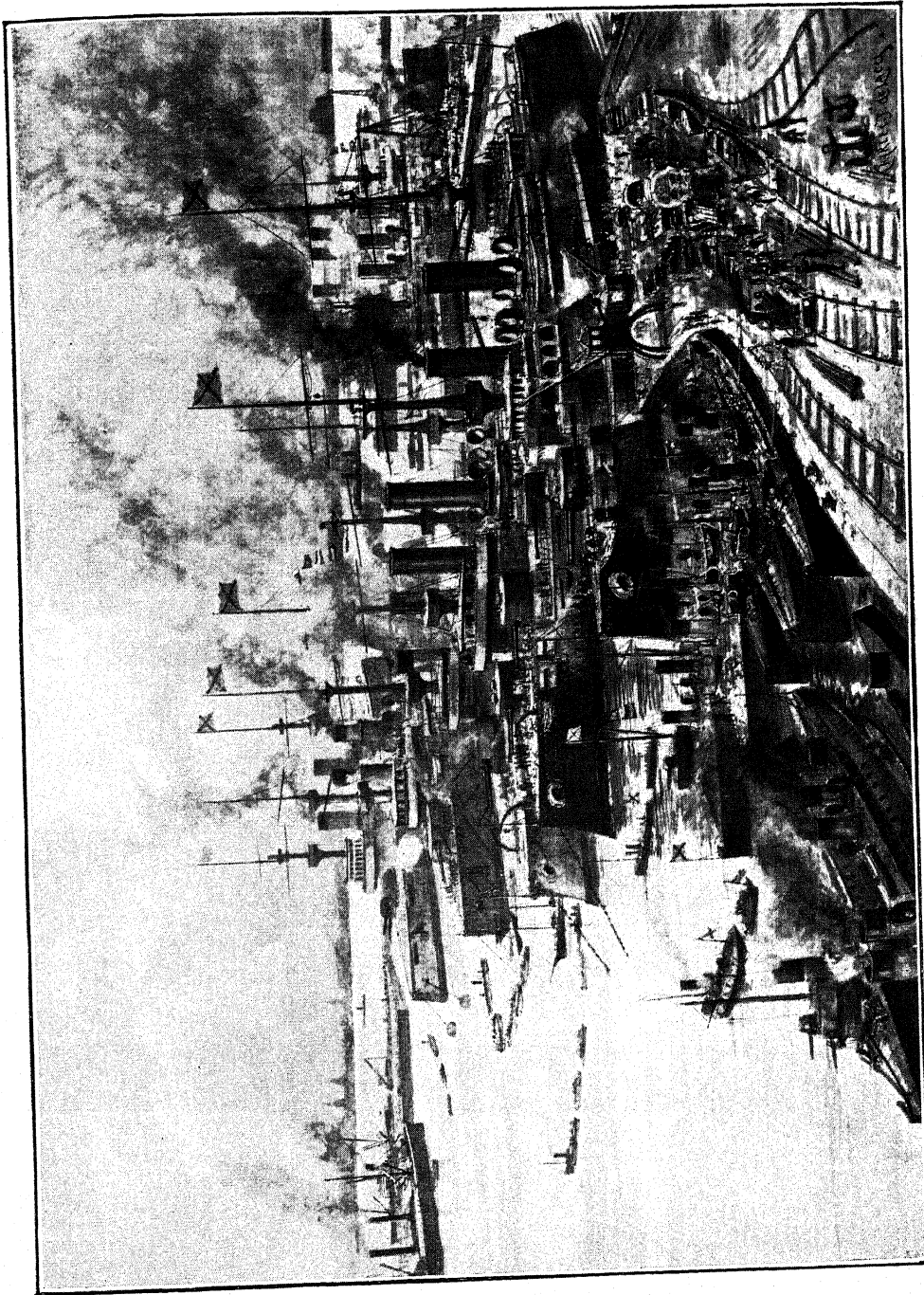
FROM a very early stage of the war much Russian hope and international interest were centred in the question whether the Russian Fleet in the Baltic could be despatched to the Far East with some reasonable expectation of reaching it in fighting trim. As a matter of fact, it was more or less authoritatively announced, immediately after the torpedo attack on Port Arthur, that another powerful Russian Fleet would shortly be sent out from the Baltic, and the end of June was mentioned as the probable date of departure. The squadron, it was said, would consist of eight battleships and five cruisers, accompanied by thirty torpedo-boats, and the command was to be given to Admiral Rozhdestvensky, a very well-known officer, who had been Russian Naval Attaché in London. The latter admitted in April that he had been offered, and had accepted, the command in question, but is reported to have expressed doubts whether he would ever take the Baltic Squadron to the Far East. It might, he thought, be required nearer home, and, in his personal opinion, by September the Russian Navy would have nothing more to do with the Far East.

It soon became apparent that in this last surmise, at any rate, the gallant Admiral was likely to prove entirely at fault. Accordingly, the work of preparing the squadron for sea was pushed on with great vigour, and in June it was

generally understood that, by some means or another, the Baltic Fleet would endeavour to make its way out to the seat of war, and redress, if possible, the balance of naval power, now clearly showing to Japan's advantage. In this country and on the Continent grave doubts were expressed as to the possibility of even getting ready the ships for sea, and these doubts, proceeding from authoritative sources, have been reflected in this narrative. It is, therefore, expedient to say thus early that these predictions, like those of Admiral Rozhdestvensky, proved inaccurate, and that in due course a considerable squadron, including seven battleships, actually sailed for the Far East from Libau in October.

This result was the more surprising, as Russian ship-building conditions are somewhat curious, and do not favour the rapid completion of vessels in course of construction, as some of the new battleships in the Baltic were at this time. In the *Times* of June 7th appeared a most interesting article dealing with the question of the Baltic Fleet's departure, and giving some useful details as to Russian ship-building methods. It appeared that at that moment there were five powerful battleships of the *Borodino* type lying afloat on the Neva or at Kronstadt. Of these two had been launched in 1901, two in 1902, and the fifth in 1903, yet even the two first—





RUSSIA'S SECOND FLEET: WARSHIPS OF THE BALTIC SQUADRON  
DESIGNATED FOR SERVICE IN THE FAR EAST.



the *Imperator Alexander III.* and the *Borodino*—had been either quite recently finished or still had some details incomplete. On the Neva, warships are launched as mere shells, without armour on the sides, and with the hulls, and more especially the superstructures, in a very rudimentary state. Hence, partly, the long period which often elapses between launching and completion. Moreover, Russian State dockyards are most imperfectly equipped for dealing with the complicated and elaborate internal fittings and arrangements of warships, and much of this work is delegated to sub-contractors, often with very unsatisfactory results.

Again, there is only a very moderate depth of water available for warships built on the Neva for their passage to Kronstadt. This was illustrated by the grounding of the *Orel* on her way down, notwithstanding the fact that she had been considerably lightened. Lastly, "the arsenal at Kronstadt is itself not well adapted for the final stages of the completion of ships, although work of that class has necessarily to be done there on a large scale. The docks are excellent, but plant and equipment are not of corresponding quality."

It is very remarkable that, in spite of these drawbacks, the Baltic Fleet should have contrived even to make a start for the Far East in 1904. But Russian energy and industry are immense, and the completion of a squadron fit for sea in October, after competent critics had doubted whether more than one or two battleships could be got ready this year, is comparable with the wonderful repository work effected on the damaged ships at Port Arthur. Throughout the war these naval surprises have been frequent, and their significance in some

cases has been considerable. For they are an apt reminder of the value to a nation which leans on its navy of private ship-building yards, by the help of which results such as those attained by Russia with infinite labour and sacrifice are often attainable with very little trouble, always provided that the necessary funds are forthcoming.

On June 20th, according to the St. Petersburg correspondent of the *Paris Journal*, the Higher Naval Board assembled under the presidency of the Tsar at Tsarskoe Selo to discuss the despatch to the Far East of the Baltic Fleet, or, as it was officially called, the Third Squadron of the Russian Fleet in the Pacific Ocean. The Board included Admiral Avellan, the Minister of Marine, and Admirals Rozhdestvensky, Niloff, Wirenius, Dubassoff, and Birileff, the last-named being the Chief of the Defences in the Baltic. The result of the discussion was a decision that the Fleet should start early in September by the Cape Horn route, in order to avoid the delay in the Suez Canal for the coal transports. As a matter of fact this decision is afterwards altered, but is noteworthy as showing how, even at this date, the movement of the squadron was beset by doubts and apprehensions.

From that time forward the Baltic Fleet was a fertile source of rumours, disappointments, changes, and surprises. The first grave matter to be settled was, of course, the coaling question, and it is this, in large measure no doubt, which caused an alteration in the route to be adopted. In due course it was announced that a great German steamship line had undertaken to coal the fleet by means of colliers stationed along the route, a proceeding as to which we had something to say in the preceding chapter. Some idea

of the magnitude of the service thus contracted for may be gathered from some simple figures of coal expenditure. It is recorded that the Japanese battleship *Asahi*, for instance, in her voyage out from Europe consumed about 5,700 tons of coal, and the *Shikishima* nearly 4,800 tons, while Japanese armoured cruisers each consumed from 3,400 to 4,400 tons. It must be remembered, too, that some of the Russian ships have uneconomical engines compared with those on the up-to-date Japanese ships. The total quantity, therefore, required for a squadron of seven battleships—to say nothing of cruisers and other craft—proceeding from the Baltic to the Far East would be something truly enormous.

As, moreover, many of the Russian ships can only carry a limited supply of coal, the frequent replenishment of their bunkers introduces a new problem. Coaling at sea is a troublesome business at the best of times, and in rough weather is practically impossible except with special appliances which are still in the experimental stage.

The matter of coaling the Baltic Fleet may, however, be dismissed for the present, and a few words given to other difficulties surrounding this huge projected naval reinforcement.

Of course, from the outset there has been the grave risk that, after a voyage lasting over two months—for some of the Russian ships are very slow, and the pace must be regulated by that of the "tubs"—the redoubtable squadron may find itself in Japanese waters without a base. Not only Port Arthur but Vladivostok also may have fallen, and, in such an event, the position of the "Third Pacific Squadron" might be most uncomfortable, not to say precarious. But evidently the Russians were confident that one, if

not both, of their two great strongholds in the Far East will hold out, and afford a haven for their new fleet in the interval of its exploits on the high seas.

Perhaps the most really pressing embarrassment in connection with the departure of the Baltic Squadron was the dearth of engineer officers and engine-room artificers of the requisite experience. It is said that the Russian Admiralty had special difficulty in securing well-trained chief and second engineers, as the pick of these grades had been drafted out to the Far East before the war, and the Black Sea Fleet had since been drawn upon to make good the war wastage. A number of engineers were taken over by the Admiralty from subsidised Russian steamship and private companies, but these have had little or no experience with the Belleville boilers, which have been supplied to every one of the newer Russian battleships. It goes without saying that here is a difficulty of the first magnitude, and one which, even though temporarily overcome, must react upon the efficiency of the squadron if ever it comes to close grips with the swift and splendidly handled ships of the Japanese Fleet.

In connection with this reported dearth of engineers it is necessary to allude to a charge made against Russia, which does not appear to have been indignantly met, as one would have expected it to have been met, by a prompt and authoritative denial. It will be remembered that, after the destruction of the *Varyag* and the *Koriets* at Chemulpo, the crews of these two vessels were allowed to return to Russia, the understanding being that they should not be allowed to take any further part in the fighting. In October a correspondent of the *Times* declared that at Kronstadt it

was generally stated, and not denied in Russian naval circles, that, notwithstanding Russian engagements to the contrary, the crews of the *Varyag* and *Koriets* had been drawn upon for the purposes of the Baltic Fleet. It is hardly conceivable that a Great Power should have stooped to the commission of an act of rank bad faith like this, but the statement was a circumstantial one, and the fact of its appearance in the columns of the *Times* should have facilitated instant and vigorous contradiction.

As regards naval commanders, "deck officers"—as distinct from engine-room staffs and minor deck ratings—the Russian Navy appears to suffer from no serious numerical deficiency. But the quality is hardly all that could be desired. The late Admiral

Makaroff is known to have held rather gloomy views as to the shortage of officers—by which, presumably, we are to understand officers of the right sort—in the Russian Navy. A superior officer of the French Navy has also spoken with some frankness on this subject. "Russia," he said, "is not a maritime nation. Her Fleet is the result of a political policy. Her officers are not

in training, being condemned by the ice to spend six months on shore, where they acquire deplorable habits. This has been fully realised by Russia, who has strained every nerve to secure an ice-free port where her sailors could be kept in constant training."



ADMIRAL WIRENIUS.

As regards the command of the "Third Squadron of the Fleet in the Pacific Ocean" there is no question that the reputation of the officer selected stands high. Admiral Sinowi Petrowich Rozhdestvensky was born in 1848, and entered the Russian Navy in 1865. Having made a special study of marine artillery, he passed in 1873 with distinction out of the Michael Artillery Academy, and four years later did brilliant service in the Russo-Turkish War as commander of a small

vessel, the *Vesta*. Ordered by his Chief to attack the Turkish Fleet he did so, although his ship only carried two guns, with a reckless bravery which gained him immense popularity throughout Russia, as well as Imperial commendation. He was decorated by Alexander II., and, after a period of service in Bulgaria, where he organised the Bulgarian "Navy," he came in 1885 to



DEPARTURE OF THE BALTIC FLEET FOR THE FAR EAST:  
THE SQUADRON LEAVING KRONSTADT.



London as Russian Naval Attaché. Here he was much liked and respected, and wrote some interesting essays on the British Navy. During the war between China and Japan he commanded the Russian Squadron in the Pacific, and in 1898 he was appointed Chief of the Marine Artillery. Early in 1904 Admiral Rozhdestvensky succeeded, as Chief of the Naval General Staff, Admiral Avellan, the latter having taken the late Admiral Tyrtoff's place as Minister of Marine. He was formally appointed to his present post on the death of Admiral Makaroff in the *Petropavlovsk*, but, as noted above, it was some months before the appointment could be said to have taken effect.

Admiral Rozhdestvensky is described later, when events have seemed to invest such a description with probable accuracy, as liable to fits of nervousness, and not long before the squadron sailed he was reported to be ill. But he may well have been worried nearly to death by the heartrending anxieties of his position. Not only had he before him a long and most troublesome voyage, the difficulties of which would be increased tenfold by the constant necessity for coal-ing at sea. Not only had he to face the certainty of meeting, on the completion of this long and arduous cruise, an alert and powerful enemy who would have ample time to prepare a warm welcome for him. Long before these stages were arrived at there were tremendous obstacles to be overcome in the way of official ineptitude and dockyard incompetence. The higher naval administration in Russia, sadly liable as it is to interference on the part more especially of the Grand Duke Alexander Michailovitch, does not make the way smooth for an able and conscientious officer whose one thought is the efficiency of his command, and it is

easy to understand that, from June to September, Rozhdestvensky must have gone through very wearing times. In particular, he probably experienced no little trouble in getting the armament of his ships arranged to his liking. In this direction he is likely to have proved an exacting critic, for he had always retained his interest in marine artillery questions, and had won the special commendation of the German Emperor by his handling of the Russian Gunnery Instruction Squadron at Reval on the occasion of the Imperial meeting in 1902.

The naval action off Port Arthur on August 10th seems to have galvanised the home authorities into instant action, for on August 14th Admiral Rozhdestvensky went on board the battleship *Kniaz Suvaroff* in the roadstead of Kronstadt, and formally assumed command of the Third Squadron of the Pacific Fleet. Admiral Birileff, commanding at Kronstadt, signalled a farewell message, expressing his confidence, and wishing the Squadron good luck. But, in point of fact, a considerable time had yet to elapse before the former Baltic Fleet could make a fair start towards its remote destination.

On August 25th it was announced that the Squadron, with the exception of the battleship *Orel*, was leaving Kronstadt on a ten days' cruise, presumably intended to serve as a trial trip. The omission of the *Orel* was due to another accident to that unfortunate vessel, which had already undergone some painful experiences. First she stranded in the Neva, and then, having been got off and taken to Kronstadt, her sea-plugs were unaccountably withdrawn, and it was some time before the hundreds of tons of water which rushed in could be pumped out. On the eve of the Squadron's departure on its



trial cruise, the *Orel* was found to be incapable of movement! On examination it was discovered that the shaft was clogged with sand, evidently put there for the purpose, notwithstanding the careful watch that had been kept. As a matter of course the outrage was attributed to the Japanese, but it is hardly likely that the latter, if they had had access to the vitals of a Russian battleship, would have stopped short at merely throwing her machinery temporarily out of order.

Apparently the "ten days' cruise" had to be curtailed owing to fresh accidents. It was rumoured that some of the ships were damaged in the course of the trials with the 12-in. guns, and on August 30th it was reported that the Squadron had returned to Kronstadt. Here any defects must have speedily been made good, for on September 11th a telegram from Kronstadt conveyed the stirring news that the Fleet had "sailed for the Far East."

But a further delay was impending. Two days later it was announced that Admiral Rozhdestvensky's ships would remain about five weeks at Reval and Libau, going through firing practice and manœuvres, and waiting for the battleship *Orel* and the protected cruiser *Oleg*. Here for the present, then, we will leave the redoubtable Squadron, to the composition of which we may now devote attention.

The first point to be noted is that the Fleet is by no means what in this country would be considered a good fighting fleet, owing to the lack of uniformity in the units, both of the battleship and cruiser divisions. Assuming the *Orel* and the *Oleg* to have joined, the Fleet now consists of seven battleships, two armoured cruisers, and five or six protected cruisers, with a few destroyers. The

battleships are the *Kniaz Suvaroff*, *Imperator Alexander III.*, *Borodino*, *Orel*, *Ossliabya*, *Navarin*, and *Sissoi Veliki*. The two armoured cruisers are the *Dmitri Donskoi* and the *Admiral Nakhimov*; the protected cruisers the *Aurora*, *Almaz*, *Svetlana*, *Jemchug*, *Oleg*, and, perhaps, the *Izumrud*. Before the Squadron actually sails from Libau, some "third-class cruisers"—i.e. converted merchantmen—may have to be added to the above list.

The newest battleships are those of the *Borodino* class, to which the *Imperator Alexander III.* and the *Orel* belong, and which may be said to include the *Kniaz Suvaroff* also, since, with the exception of displacing about 450 tons less, she is a sister ship. The *Borodino* is of about 13,500 tons displacement, with 16,300 horse-power engines, and a nominal speed of 18 knots. She has protective armour nine inches thick, tapering to four inches. She has six torpedo tubes, and carries four 12-in. guns, twelve 6-in. quick-firers, and many smaller guns.

The *Ossliabya*, which was on its way to the Far East when the war broke out, is of 12,674 tons displacement, and was launched in 1898. Her nominal speed is also 18 knots, but she is not so well protected as the ships of the *Borodino* class; she carries four 10-in. and eleven 6-in., besides numerous smaller guns, and has six torpedo tubes. The *Navarin* and *Sissoi Veliki* are older ships, heavily armed and protected, but slow, having an official speed of 16 knots, from which two or three may safely be deducted. The *Navarin* is of 10,000, the *Sissoi Veliki* of 8,880 tons displacement. Both carry four 12-in. guns, and eight and six 6-in. quick-firers respectively.

Of the cruisers, the *Dmitri Donskoi* and *Admiral Nakhimov* are both old and



slow, the former being of 5,796 tons, the latter 8,500 tons. The *Admiral Nakhimov* carries eight 8-in. and ten 6-in. guns, the *Dmitri Donskoi* six 6-in. and ten 4.7-in. guns. The biggest of the protected cruisers are the *Aurora* and *Oleg*, of nearly 7,000 tons, with a main armament of eight 6-in. and twelve 6-in.

geneous fleet like that of Japan. On the other hand, it must be remembered that Russia has still some powerful ships in the Far East, and that, in the doubtful event of this new squadron's arrival, and the still more improbable event of a conjunction with even two or three of the larger vessels under Admiral Skrydloff's



ADMIRAL AVELLAN.

guns respectively. The rest are small ships of under 4,000 tons, but swift and handy, with speeds varying from 19 to 24 knots, nominally. They carry six guns—4.7-in. and 5.9-in. as main armament.

It will thus be seen that the Squadron, although numerically strong, and containing some very powerful units, is not well adapted to meeting a really homo-

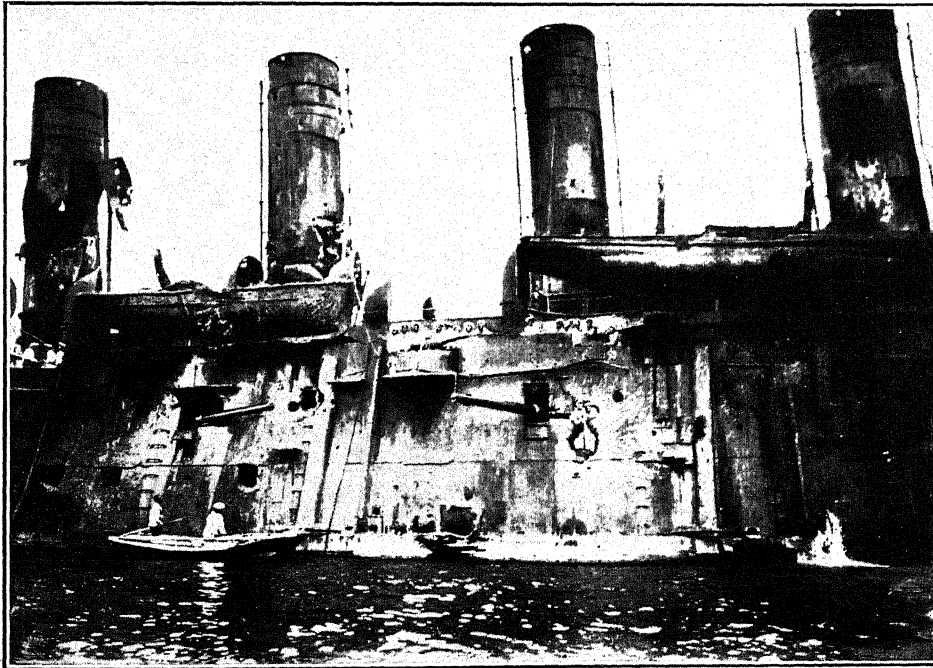
command, the Russian naval forces in the Pacific would once more be sufficient to cause Japan great uneasiness. But this is a direction in which we certainly need not seek to anticipate actual events.

A more profitable topic is the extraordinary nervousness which the Russians display with reference to the future sailing of the Squadron from the Baltic. When the Squadron had been at Libau

about a week it became known in Copenhagen that a large number of vessels in the Russian service were cruising in northern waters without any definite destination. A correspondent of a leading Berlin paper wrote about this time :— "The chief command over this spy fleet is said to be exercised by a Russian naval captain named Hartling, who has for a long time been in Copenhagen, and who maintains an active telegraphic correspondence with numerous points on the coast." It was evident that the Russians were being unduly influenced by the absurd stories circulated regarding Japanese preparations for laying submarine mines in the channel through which the Russian Fleet must pass in order to reach the North Sea. Apparently they communi-

cated their fears to others, and asked for assistance against the supposed nefarious designs of the far-off enemy. For considerable discussion was aroused in the Danish Press by the manner in which the Japanese Naval Attaché, Captain Takikava, was "shadowed" by the Danish police during a recent visit to the Skaw.

Since even the higher naval authorities thought fit to lend a ready ear to such stories, it may be imagined that the officers and men of the Fleet were not wholly free from apprehensions. In a properly trained Navy constantly at work such silly scares would hardly be possible. But that they were possible on Russian warships is about to be proved by actual happenings, the detail of which must be reserved for another chapter.



EFFECTS OF JAPANESE SHELLS ON A RUSSIAN WARSHIP.

*The "Gromoboi" at Vladivostok after the combat of August 13. Examination of the "Gromoboi" plates reveals how marvellously the Japanese contrived to concentrate their fire upon the vital portions of the enemy's ship. Round about the gun embrasures the hits are thickly planted.*

## CHAPTER LXIV.

JAPANESE ADVANCING—RUSSIANS AT MUKDEN—THE IMPERIAL TOMBS—POSITION OF THE  
OPPOSING FORCES—JAPANESE SOLDIER'S OUTFIT—CHANGE OF ATTITUDE—RUSSIANS  
PREPARE TO TAKE OFFENSIVE—KUROPATKIN'S ORDER OF THE DAY.

THE indecisive character of the great Battle of Liao-yang is clearly reflected in the condition of affairs which prevailed in both the opposing armies in the two or three weeks following the Russian retirement. Had Liao-yang been a conclusive victory for Japan we may be sure that, utterly worn out as the bulk of her gallant soldiers were, a sufficient number would have been got together to pursue the shattered remnant of the Russian forces beyond Mukden, and perhaps beyond Tie-ling, with a view to an early and final advance upon Harbin. Had they been thus pursued the Russians might have stood firmly at Tie-ling, but hardly at Mukden, which was then by no means well adapted for the purposes of an obstinate defence. In a word, the sequel of the battle would have been as different as possible from what it was, namely, a retirement only moderately hindered by pursuit, followed by a distinct lull, in which both sides made strenuous, but not at all excited, preparation for a fresh bout of still more deadly and desperate fighting.

We have already had occasion to speak in Chapter LIX. of the promptitude with which the Japanese after the capture of Liao-yang proceeded to utilise their new possession as an immense supply depôt. In a short time their facilities in this direction will have been enormously increased, for their engineers have been busy with the line of

railway in rear, and also with the construction of the field line to An-tung on the banks of the Yalu, which is intended eventually to join the Manchurian Railway at Liao-yang. This matter of communication is of such extreme interest and practical importance that we may usefully anticipate a little, and mention here that before the end of September the first Japanese train arrived at Liao-yang, a change of gauge having been now effected between the latter place and Dalny. Attention has been drawn in a previous chapter to the seriousness of the blow thus dealt to the Russians, who, even if they succeed in recapturing the line, cannot use their broad-gauge engines and trucks upon it, and cannot easily reconstruct the old track, as the Japanese have thoughtfully cut down the sleepers. A neat example this of the scientific fashion in which warfare is conducted nowadays.

Also, the Japanese took care to strengthen their hold upon Liao-yang by providing it with some useful defences which, although not so formidable as those which the Russians had time to construct on the Shu-shan hills, may still prove effective should the Russians ever succeed in driving the Japanese field army to the south of the Tai-tse-ho in the endeavour to regain their lost military capital of Manchuria.

Before leaving Liao-yang it is interest-

ing to note that among the various paraphernalia left behind by the Russians the Japanese came across a highly instructive "find," a set, namely, of the general orders issued from day to day by General Kuropatkin. Some very impressive extracts from these orders are given by the Special Correspondent of the *Standard*, who says that "they disclose the gravest defects in the discipline and training of the Army, and more especially of the Cossacks. It appears from them that the colonel of one of the Cossack regiments was removed from the command for deserting a post of great importance at the mere rumour of the enemy's approach, and without waiting to inform the force on his immediate front—a defection which endangered the whole movement.

"Two colonels of the 23rd East Siberian Regiment were, it seems, cashiered, for reasons that are not stated, and the Commanding Officer of the 5th Ural Cossacks was dismissed the Service for conduct unworthy of an officer and for habitual drunkenness.

"These are only a few examples of the looseness of discipline in the higher commissioned ranks. Numbers of the Russian officers, it is said, stayed behind drinking in Liao-yang while their regiments were fighting at the front. Many of them are censured by General Kuropatkin for discussing in public the conduct of the war, and the character and ability of their seniors in rank.

"The orders contain repeated complaints of the shameful treatment to which the Chinese were subjected, and the wilful destruction of property.

"General Kuropatkin also calls attention to the readiness with which ammunition and transport waggons were abandoned during retreat, and the serious difficulties such laxity entailed."

When it is added that General Kuropatkin in these orders complains bitterly of the enormous waste of shells by the quick-firing guns "which blaze away at ineffectual ranges and without a definite objective," it will be understood that the Japanese are encouraged in the belief that in discipline and training, at any rate, the Russian Army can hardly claim superiority to their own. Such an official revelation, too, goes far to explain much of the Liao-yang and subsequent fighting, and to enhance our sympathy for a Commander-in-Chief who has to meet a dangerous enemy with troops so badly officered.

We may now turn to the Japanese armies in the field, which, by the end of September, we find occupying to the north of Liao-yang the same order as they did before the battle of August 28th—September 4th. In the meantime some pressure has been exercised on the retreating Russians, but it has not amounted to much, practically speaking, partly because the troops were frightfully exhausted, and partly because between Yen-tai and Mukden Kuropatkin had a fresh force in reserve—probably one First Army Corps under General Baron Meyendorf—which Kuroki naturally hesitated to tackle with tired troops. While, then, the Russians were withdrawing behind this useful screen the troops engaged in the Liao-yang operations, the Japanese Armies filled their empty stomachs and rested their tired limbs, at the same time strengthening their hold upon a new position which had to Mukden much the same relation as had their position on August 28th to Liao-yang. Their right was thrown forward to Ben-tsia-pu-tse to the south-east of Mukden on the road which runs down to Pen-si-hu on the Tai-tse River. They were also in occupation of the Yen-tai coal-mines, and had several

divisions on and to the west of the railway north of Liao-yang. If we compare this with the position shown in the map on page 108 of the present volume, we shall find a repetition such as does not often occur in the history of a campaign, although, of course, there are conditions, geographical and other, which modify the resemblance.

Exactly what the Japanese intended to do by way of following up their incomplete though highly important victory at Liao-yang will probably never be known except to a chosen few. But there is ground for the belief that they contemplated a resumption of the offensive in three columns by way of Pen-si-hu and Ben-tsia-pu-tse, from the Yen-tai coal mines, and along the main road—the Imperial Road as it is called—between Liao-yang and Mukden. It is suggested that this advance would have taken place about September 20th, but that the Japanese were deterred from making it by finding an unexpected increase in the strength of the Russian forces, the numerical superiority of which had been secured by recent large and continuous reinforcements. But it is equally possible that they may have gleaned some idea of what was going on behind the Russian screen, and learnt that the enemy, too, was contemplating an offensive movement. The subsequent proceedings point more clearly to cheerful willingness on the part of the Japanese to allow the Russians to blunder into a hornets' nest than they do to reluctance to attack merely because the enemy had been reinforced. Be this as it may, the Japanese, with the exception of a slight movement at the end of the third week in September, allow the month to pass without any attempt to put Mukden through the same damaging process to

which they had recently subjected Liao-yang. At the same time they keep closely in touch with the enemy, and omit no precaution necessary to enable them to make a swift and effective counterstroke should the enemy be foolish enough to attack them on their long but carefully guarded front.

We must now take a glance at the Russians, who, having retired to Mukden and Tie-ling, take speedy advantage of the fact that their retreat has been accomplished with such comparative ease and freedom from interruption. There is pretty strong evidence that, at one time or another, there was a good deal of confusion during the retirement, which was aggravated by heavy rains, rendering the withdrawal of the wounded and the transport extremely difficult. Apparently it was Kuropatkin's expectation that the Japanese would immediately continue the pursuit, for his first thought seems to have been the fortification of Tie-ling with a view to an early evacuation of Mukden. It is said that at this stage Kuropatkin received a peremptory order from the Tsar to retake Liao-yang, and that in consequence of this he altered his plans for making a stand at Tie-ling, and prepared first to check the enemy south of Mukden and then to march down south. But it is equally probable that it was the failure of the Japanese to press the pursuit which emboldened the Russian Commander-in-Chief to pause in his retirement, and so avoid the further loss of prestige which a hurried withdrawal from Mukden would have entailed.

As a military position Mukden is of little use. South of the town flows the Hun river through a low, sandy waste which stretches for about twenty miles, and south of which, again, there appears



A FORMIDABLE RUSSIAN DEFENCE AT LIAO-YANG: JAPANESE STORMERS CAUGHT IN PITFALLS AND BARBED-WIRE ENTANGLEMENTS.

to have been a long line of sand-bag batteries. These, with railway embankments affording some protection of the Russian right flank, and a mud rampart covering the suburbs, appear to have been the main defences of Mukden at this period, though we hear later of points in the neighbourhood which are rather vaguely spoken of by the Russians as "strongly fortified." But, apart from these military deficiencies, Mukden is a busy and thriving commercial centre, with a population of over 300,000, and an imposing appearance, resembling that of Peking, of which it is a copy on a smaller scale. The native town lies to the east of the railway station, and is surrounded by sixty-foot walls. It is in the form of a square with sides a mile long, each of which is pierced by two massive gateways surmounted by watch-towers and batteries. The suburbs extend for a mile on each side of the walls and, as noted above, are enclosed within a rampart of earth. The railway station is about two miles from the gates in the western wall, and between it and the western suburbs is the newly built Russian cantonment.

Mukden was the old Manchu capital, and still retains a special sanctity in the eyes of the Chinese, since here are the venerated tombs of the ancestors of the Imperial family. Further, quite close to Mukden, about five miles from the north-west of the city, rises a range of hills which, except for sundry small valleys, runs for about 700 miles to a certain lake near the summit of the sacred "Ever White Mountain." In that lake, according to Chinese tradition, rests the head of the Great Dragon, whose body occupies the whole aforesaid range of hills, and the tip of whose tail is immured near Mukden.

There have been many descriptions of the Imperial tombs, but none more adapted for reproduction here than one contributed to the *Times* of September 22nd, 1904, which states that "due north about two miles from the outer city, on dry rising ground, is a beautiful semi-wild park of common forest trees and bushes, covering, probably, 2,000 acres. In the centre of this park is a grove of fine fir trees, which are surrounded by a brick wall about 600 yards in each direction, forming a perfectly square enclosure. The south or main approach is over a long stone-paved causeway, now overgrown with trees and grass. Near the great white marble *Pai-lau*, or triumphal arch, it widens and crosses a ruined marble bridge over some artificial water, now much filled in with reeds and sedge grass. Beyond a grand gateway, with yellow and purple glazed tiled roofs, stand on either side buildings which were once palatial halls. Within, a wide paved avenue flanked with huge stone monuments of elephants, horses, cows, camels, and white marble pillars, with carved clouds encircling them; houses in which the retinue of the Emperor can rest; a magnificent square tower, with three-tiered roof shelters; a huge white marble tablet nearly thirty feet high, standing on the back of a marble tortoise, and bearing an inscription sacred to the wonderful deeds of Tai Tsung, the conqueror of China, who compelled the Chinese to wear the queue (pigtail), and tried in vain to make their women cease deforming their feet.

"Beyond, and north of this tower, is a high embattlemented brick wall with a strong gateway and guard tower, as of a city. These walls are about 250 yards in each direction. Within their square enclosure are the three great halls where the



worship of the spirit of the departed Tai Tsung is carried on by some Prince of the Blood, or the Tartar General, as proxy for the Emperor, on the first and fifteenth days of the moon, and especially at the solstice festivals. North of this square, and surrounded by a high, circular, embattlemented brick wall, is a huge oval mound of earth, beneath which slumbers, surrounded by all that makes for peaceful, quiet beauty, Tai Tsung, father of the first Manchu Emperor of China. Above this most sacred mound (there is apparently no entrance to the interior) appear the topmost branches of an old elm, still putting out leaves in spring, though badly weakened by huge bunches of mistletoe. The tree is said to be the dwelling place of one of the spirits of Tai Tsung. It was the custom of his ancestors to bury their chiefs in hollow trees. Thus, it is said, were originally buried the chiefs whose graves lie further east, near the Manchu village at Yung Ling (Tombs of the Brave), about 80 miles east from Mukden. To the rear of Tai Tsung's grave mound is a small artificial horseshoe-shaped mountain to guard it from the evil north.

"Seven miles due east of Mukden are about 4,000 or 5,000 acres of beautiful parklike forest, with steep cliffs to the south, under which winds the Hun river. Near the centre of this forest is the second Mukden tomb, the Fu Ling (Tomb of the Blessed), also called Tung Ling (Eastern Tomb), with buildings and arrangements similar to those at the Pei Ling, but a somewhat larger grave mound, beneath which rest the sacred remains of No-ar-chu, father of Tai Tsung. All the spirits hold frequent and social intercourse with each other and with the sacred deities of the Dragon Pool on the Long White Mountain; they travel underground along the ever-throbbing pulses of the Great

Dragon. Hence the agony of the Manchus when it was proposed that the Russian railway should cross over the ridge between the two tombs of Tai Tsung and No-ar-chu. The railway eventually found a convenient little valley."

As may be expected, the prospect of a battle in the vicinity of these extremely sacred tombs is most agitating to the Chinese Government, which makes urgent representations to the Tsar and to General Kuropatkin not to allow these hallowed resting places to be desecrated. The Chinese Governor of Mukden even beseeches the Russian Commander-in-Chief on no account to fight a battle near the city, to which Kuropatkin drily replies that it would be more to the point to refer that request to the Japanese. But Kuropatkin knows well the risk incurred by treating such representations with complete indifference, and, accordingly, on September 22nd he pays a special visit to the holy groves in connection with a complaint that has been made that the Russians have been felling trees there. The complaint is declared by Kuropatkin to be without foundation, and the Chinese Government is notified that the Imperial Tombs are badly neglected, and that the Manchu guardian of the sacred groves has been ascertained to be himself in prison for having sold timber from the sacred enclosure to the inhabitants of Mukden!

But Kuropatkin has other things to think about besides the necessity of allaying the apprehensions of the Chinese concerning the Imperial Tombs. He has a large and rapidly increasing force under his orders, and these have to be distributed with a view not only to future fighting but also to present commissariat possibilities. The recent enormous concentration of troops at Mukden is said



GENERAL KUROPATKIN INTERVIEWING CHINESE OFFICIALS DURING THE STOPPAGE OF HIS SPECIAL TRAIN AT MUKDEN.

to have completely exhausted the food reserves, and the provision dealers following the army have lost most of their stocks during the retreat from Liao-yang owing to inadequate means of transport. There is also a good deal of trouble experienced in the matter of warm clothing, with which the Russian troops are very poorly supplied, and, as the cold weather is setting in earlier than usual, the military authorities resort to the plan of buying Chinese clothing. This is strongly resented by the Japanese, who on several occasions are deceived by the appearance of the enemy in this unfamiliar garb. A point of international law is thus raised, for it is quite contrary to international usage to employ troops so dressed that they cannot be distinguished as troops, and, although it would seem that the Russians have not erred in this matter knowingly, it is generally admitted that the practice complained of is quite unjustifiable.

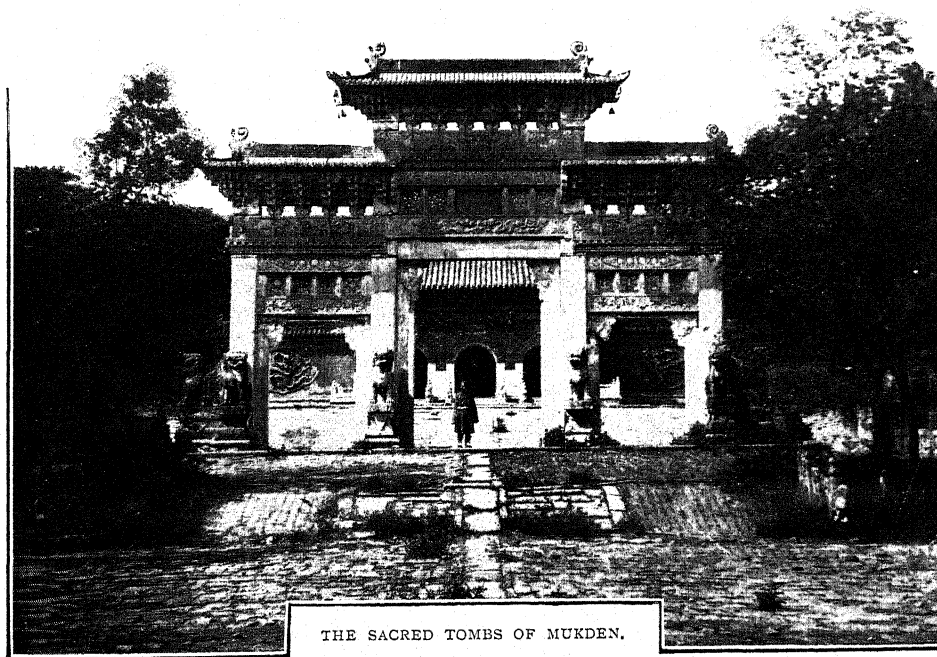
Notwithstanding commissariat and sartorial deficiencies, the Russian troops

at Mukden and Tie-ling soon pull themselves together after the retreat, and by the end of the second week of September General Kuropatkin is once more in command of a large and fairly compact army. With this he is not only occupying both Mukden and Tie-ling, the fortifications of the latter being still in progress, but is also holding the banks of the Hun-ho and various points between Mukden and Sin-min-ting, which lies between thirty and forty miles to the west of Mukden on the Liao River. The latter precaution is necessary in view of a possible Japanese flanking movement on Mukden along the Liao from Ying-kau, and it is rather a troublesome precaution by reason of the Chun-chuses, who are now beginning to display most objectionable activity in this quarter.

There is no need to follow at all closely the movements of the two opposing forces during the last three weeks of September. It is sufficient to say that no very serious fighting ensues, the most important engagement being one near Ben-tsia-pu-tse on the 17th, which was the result of a

reconnaissance in force by the Russians under Generals Rennenkampf and Samsonoff. The Russians found the Japanese strongly posted at Ben-tsia-pu-tse, which was well fortified and occupied by "at least one brigade of infantry with 12 guns." General Mishtchenko, at the head of two Cossack regiments, had also been in daily contact with the enemy. On the 20th-21st the Japanese made a forward movement to one of the several passes in this region which are known as Ta-lings, this one being an important position on the extreme Russian left, about fifty miles east by south-east of Mukden. According to the Russian official account this attack was repulsed by General Bildering after three hours' fighting on the 21st, in the course of which the Japanese are said to have lost 700 men, while the Russian casualties were 96 men killed and 270 wounded.

It was this attack, accompanied by indications of movement all along the line, that fostered the idea of an immediate Japanese advance, and the idea continued to prevail until the end of September, when the complexion of affairs suddenly changed. During the last week of the month there were daily encounters of patrols, and behind the outpost screens on both sides there must have been a good deal of activity if only by reason of the constant influx of reinforcements. For the Japanese, as well as the Russians, are making good use of the lull in the fighting to stiffen their ranks. They have also thrown several bridges over the Tai-tse-ho, and have replenished their stock of ammunition until, by the end of the month, they are as fit and eager for "business" as ever they have been throughout the campaign. It is well they are, for the test to which they



THE SACRED TOMBS OF MUKDEN.

*Marble Arch and South Entrance into the North Tomb, where lies the father of the first Manchu Emperor of China.*

are about to be put is one which could not possibly be stood by any troops who were not both in the pink of fighting condition, but also splendidly "found" as regards every sort of equipment and war material.

At the close of September the position of the opposing forces was as follows: The Russians had two divisions on the Hun river south of Mukden, four divisions at Mukden itself, and detachments guarding Sin-min-ting to the west and a line running eastwards along the Hun-ho through Fu-shun—where there are important coal mines—to the Ta-ling Pass above mentioned. The remainder of the Russian Army was concentrated at Tieling.

The Japanese were in their old order, the Right Army, under General Kuroki, being to the east at Ben-tsia-pu-tse, where there was one division, the remaining two divisions being at the Yen-tai mines. General Nozu's Centre Army, with a portion of the Left Army under General Oku, was on the main line of the railway and along the branch line from Yen-tai to the mines. The remainder of General Oku's force was to the west of the railway.

On September 30th Reuter's correspondent at Mukden telegraphs that the Russian estimate of the Japanese strength is as follows: "General Kuroki has the Guards, the 2nd Division, and the 12th Division, totalling 36 battalions; nine squadrons of cavalry and 108 guns; a separate artillery corps of 108 guns; the Guards' Reserve Brigade, consisting of eight battalions with 24 guns; and the reserve brigades, 32 battalions with 36 guns. The total of General Kuroki's Army is 76 battalions, 18 squadrons of cavalry, and 246 guns.

"General Oku's Army consists of the

3rd, 4th, and 6th Divisions, or 36 battalions, with nine squadrons of cavalry and 108 guns; one separate cavalry brigade of eight squadrons; a separate artillery brigade of 108 guns; a cavalry brigade of nine squadrons; reserve brigades, 24 battalions, with 26 guns. The total strength of General Oku's Army is 60 battalions of infantry, 26 squadrons of cavalry, and 242 guns.

"General Nozu commands the 5th and 10th Divisions. His total force consists of 44 battalions of infantry, nine squadrons of cavalry, and 120 guns.

"The grand total of the Japanese Army now facing that of General Kuropatkin is 180 battalions—which, allowing 800 men for each battalion, works out at 144,000 bayonets, 6,380 cavalry, and 638 guns."

With all possible respect for the Russian calculations, it may be seriously doubted whether this is not a considerable under-estimate, in view of the pretty generally accepted facts as to the strength of the Japanese during the Liaoyang fighting, the probability that a large proportion of the wounded must have resumed their places in the fighting line, and the certainty that very large reinforcements have been received during the past three weeks as a set-off to those which are known to have been arriving at Mukden.

The marvellous preparedness of the Japanese Army was, perhaps, at no stage of the campaign more clearly demonstrated than it was at this juncture. In singular contrast to the deficiency of warm clothing among the Russian troops were the admirable arrangements long ago carefully thought out, and now in perfect working order, for affording the Japanese soldiers protection against the impending winter cold. By the end of

September all the three armies in the field had been supplied with their cold weather kit, and it is undoubtedly due in great measure to this circumstance that Marshal Oyama's troops were subsequently enabled to accomplish a feat of endurance in the way of hard and continuous fighting for which it is well-nigh impossible to find a parallel in the history of war.

Mention has been made from time to time in this narrative of some of the more important articles of the Japanese soldier's service uniform and equipment. But at this point it will be specially interesting to take advantage of a very full and practical description of the complete outfit which appeared in the *British*



MISS MCCAUL.

*Medical Journal* of Nov. 12th as the outcome of a unique opportunity for examination and report. Miss McCaul, a lady with wide experience of active service conditions in South Africa, and of the working of the British Army Medical Department, had been commissioned by Her Majesty the Queen to go to Japan and inquire into the working of the Japanese Red Cross Society. She had brought back with her the complete outfit of a soldier of the Japanese Imperial Guard, and these, after they had been inspected with great interest by the King,

were placed at the disposal of the Editor of the *British Medical Journal* for examination. Subjoined is a transcript from the admirable report furnished by that organ, which has always displayed an extremely keen and critical appreciation of all matters relating to the physical welfare of fighting men.

"The complete outfit," says the *British Medical Journal*, "comprises both winter and summer uniforms and under-clothing, overcoats, putties and boots, gloves and hoods, knapsack, water bottle, mess-tin and canteen, a grass-woven case to contain the ration of rice, blanket, portable tent, mosquito net for the head, housewife, bandage-wrapper and identification label.

There is even a tin box containing creosote pills, which each soldier must carry and is expected to take as a prophylactic against dysentery. One notable feature of all the clothing is that it is apparently made of the best material. The material for the winter clothing appears to be all wool, and in colour and warmth reminds one of the brownish Jaeger clothing which is well known in this country."

Of the summer kit which, at the period now being dealt with, the Japanese soldier is discarding, but which has evidently stood well a very exhaustive test, the

following is a detailed description :—" In the neat blue parade uniform, jacket or tunic, plain flat brass buttons are used, but in the working kit buttons are done away with as far as possible, fastenings being in nearly all instances carried out by means of flat hooks and eyes. The summer jacket and trousers are of khaki drill; the jacket is perfectly plain, and there are no buttons on any of the garments. A strip of white linen is issued to wind round the neck as a collar inside the tunic. The forage cap which goes with this uniform is a marvel of lightness. It has a detachable linen collar to be used in summer, from which hangs a linen screen to protect the neck. This screen being made in three parts—a centre and two sides—allows the air to pass freely. For all uniforms the trousers are made like riding breeches, in that they end above the ankle, where they are made to fit tight to the limb, being fastened by tapes instead of buttons. Putties or gaiters must, of course, be worn with these. The ordinary great-coat is of thick woollen cloth with bone buttons. It has a hood which can be drawn over the head. A comparatively small detail in the cut of this, as also of the winter great-coat, shows how carefully health and comfort, and therefore individual efficiency, have been considered. The free edges of the

front, instead of being cut straight, slope outwards below the waist, making the skirt of the coat lap over more completely below; it is thus prevented from gaping in walking, and the legs and knees are protected from rain. The front of the skirt can be buttoned back

in order to allow free movement of the lower limbs for marching in dry weather.

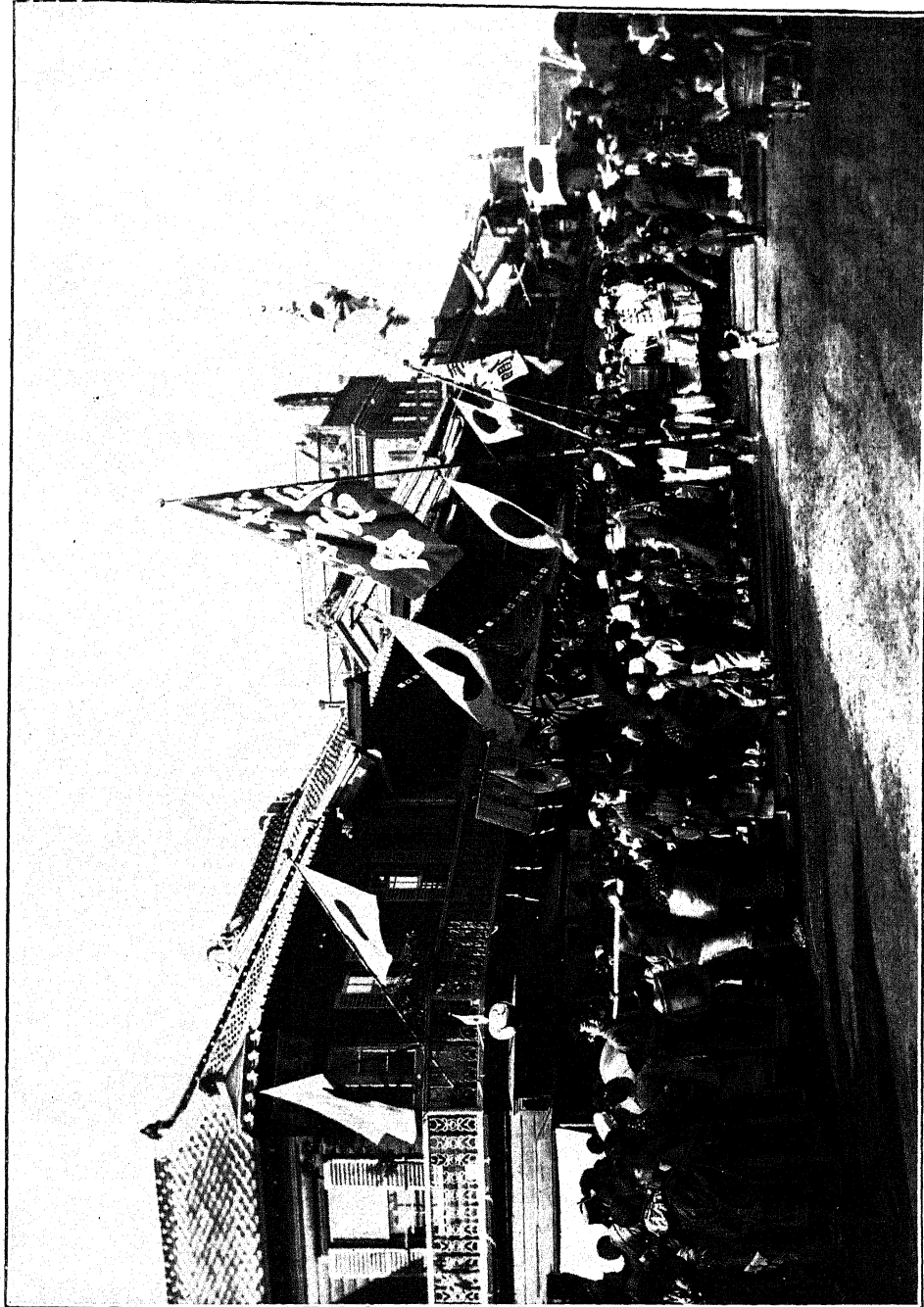
"A mosquito-net 'helmet,' or head covering, in addition to its value as a preventive of malaria, is a great comfort in summer, when there are many flies. That issued to the Japanese soldier is made of green netting, stretched on two circles of cane, so as to make a long drum with one end knocked out, into which the head is passed. The two rings of cane are kept apart by a wire spring, which allows the drum to be flattened and buttoned down for carriage."

The winter jacket and trousers are cut plain like the summer khaki suit, but are made of the aforesaid brown woollen material. The "cold-proof" winter overcoat receives special description and warm commendation in the *British Medical Journal*. "Made of thick woollen cloth it has a large collar covered with fur, which is of course inside when the collar is raised. From the middle of the edge of this collar a cotton cap or hood can be pulled out so as to cover the head, and over this can be



CAMPAIGNING KIT OF A JAPANESE INFANTRYMAN.





PROCESSION AT YOKOHAMA TO CELEBRATE THE VICTORY AT LIAO-YANG.



worn the ample detached woollen 'cold-proof' hood. Hanging by cords from the neck are large gloves or mittens—one division for all the fingers and one for the thumb; they can thus be thrown off, when the hand is required for firing or any other purpose, without being lost. A sheepskin waistcoat with the wool outside is also issued for severe weather. It fastens on one side.

"The underclothing is of similar good material to that of the outer garments, a cotton shirt and drawers for summer and a thick knitted woollen jersey, or sweater, and pants for winter. The ribbed woollen stockings are made without heels, and warm toe-caps are issued in the coldest weather to wear over the stockings to prevent frost bite. These toe-caps are made of a lambswool material like very thick lint, the soft surface being inside. A roll of fine striped flannel of very good quality and about a yard and a half long is issued to be wound round the abdomen, and takes the place of a cholera belt."

Of the Japanese army boots it is said that in general appearance they resemble the well-known "ammunition boot" issued to the British soldier, "but on close inspection they are seen to be far superior. The leather of the uppers is good and reasonably soft, the sole is thinner than that of our Army boot, and is thinned off at the waist, making the boot more flexible in marching. The flat of the sole is studded with iron hobnails, and the toe and heel have brass plates. The boots weigh 3 lb., as against the 4 lb. of our soldiers' boots. For the temporary use of men with sore feet, the soft native shoe with grass sole, such as is used by the 'rickshaw' men and the people generally in Japan, is served out.

"The knapsack is of leather with the

hair outside, its shape being maintained by a wooden frame, and this seems to us to be capable of improvement. The khaki-coloured hemp haversack is divided lengthwise to form two compartments, and resembles somewhat the haversack carried by our officers. A useful addition to the slings supporting it from the opposite shoulder is a short strap fixed in the centre of the top of the sack with a hook to fix on the waist-belt, and thus take off some of the weight from the sling.

"For carrying additional small articles of clothing the soldier has a long sack about 9 inches in width and 6 feet long, open at each end and stitched across at its centre, so as to make two bags. It is worn over one shoulder like a bandolier, the ends being tucked under the waist-belt at the opposite side.

"The water bottle, canteen, and mess-tin are of aluminium, the first two being blackened outside; the mess-tin fits inside the canteen like a tray. The rice ration is carried in the small grass box shown in front of the mess-tin. The copper Chinese camp kettle is a very practical contrivance. It has double sides; the water poured into the outer jacket is heated by burning charcoal in a small stove in the centre of the vessel, air being admitted by the lateral aperture near the bottom, through which also the ashes can be extracted. With this, water can be boiled even in a gale, and the Japanese soldiers have realised its value in campaigning, and use it very generally."

After this somewhat long but surely interesting digression we may return to the Japanese armies actually in the field, in whose attitude, as foreshadowed in the commencement of this chapter, a singular change is now taking place. After the movement on September 20th-

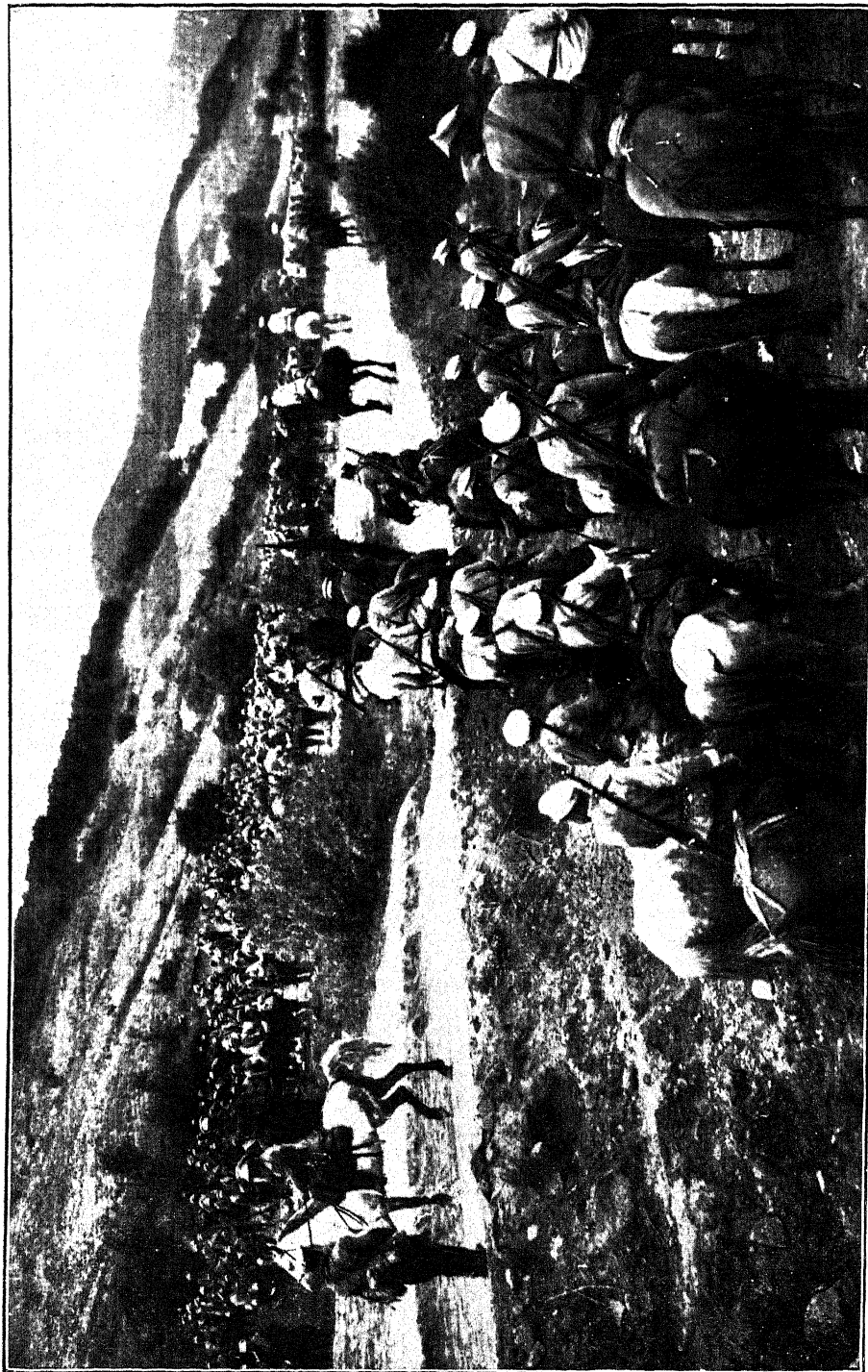
21st, the pressure on the Russian front is gradually relaxed, until it becomes evident that preparations are being made to stand on the defensive. There are outpost collisions in the first two or three days of October, but nothing in the nature of an advance, and about October 3rd telegrams from Mukden state that the Japanese are entrenching along their whole front, and, assisted by a large number of Chinese, are constructing strong defences to the east of the railway.

Meanwhile a contrary disposition is being exhibited on the Russian side. On October 2nd General Kuropatkin issues to his troops an Order of the Day which it is necessary to quote in full, since, notwithstanding the onesidedness of the views expressed, it forms a genuine historical preface to the tremendous operation that ensues:—

“More than seven months ago the enemy treacherously fell upon us at Port Arthur before war had been declared. Since then, by land and sea, the Russian troops have performed many heroic deeds of which the Fatherland may be justly proud. The enemy, however, is not only not overthrown, but in his arrogance continues to dream of complete victory. The troops of the Manchurian army, in unvarying good spirits, have hitherto not been numerically strong enough to defeat the Japanese army. Much time is necessary for overcoming all difficulties and strengthening the active army so as to enable it to accomplish with complete success the arduous but honourable task imposed upon it. It is for this reason that, in spite of the repeated repulse of the attacks of the Japanese upon our positions at Ta-shi-chao, Lian-dian-san and Liao-yang, I did not consider the time to have arrived to take advantage of

these successes to begin a forward movement, and I, therefore, gave the order to retreat. You left the positions you so heroically defended covered with piles of the enemy's dead, without allowing yourselves to be distorted by the foe, and, in preparedness for a fresh fight, after five days' battle at Liao-yang, you retired on the new positions previously prepared.

“After successfully defending all advanced and main positions you withdrew to Mukden under the most difficult conditions. Attacked by General Kuroki's army, you marched through almost impassable mud, and, fighting throughout the day and extricating the guns and carts with your hands at night, and returned to Mukden without abandoning a single gun, prisoner, or wounded man, and with the baggage train entirely intact. I ordered the retreat with a sorrowful heart, but with unshaken confidence that it was necessary in order to gain a complete and decisive victory over the enemy when the time came. The Emperor has assigned for the conflict with Japan forces sufficient to assure us victory. All the difficulties of transporting these forces over a distance of 10,000 versts (6,666 miles) are being overcome in a spirit of self-sacrifice, and with indomitable energy and skill by Russian men of every branch and rank of the service and every social position, to whom has been entrusted this work, which for difficulty is unprecedented in the history of warfare. In the course of seven months hundreds of thousands of men, tens of thousands of horses and carts, and millions of poods of stores have been coming uninterruptedly by rail from European Russia and Siberia to Manchuria. If the regiments which have already been sent out prove to be in-



MASSING OF RUSSIAN COSSACK CAVALRY BEFORE A FIGHT.

*One of the greatest surprises of the war up to this stage, at least, has been the ineffectiveness of the much vaunted Cossacks. They have proved of little use in the larger operations, and have been disappointing even as scouts.*

sufficient fresh troops will arrive, for the inflexible wish of the Emperor that we should vanquish the foe will be inflexibly fulfilled.

"Hitherto the enemy in operating has relied on his great forces, and, disposing his armies so as to surround us, has chosen as he deemed fit his time for attack. But now the moment to go and meet the enemy, for which the whole army has been longing, has come, and the time has arrived for us to compel the Japanese to do our will, for the forces of the Manchurian army are strong enough to begin the forward movement. Nevertheless you must unceasingly be mindful of the victory to be gained over our strong and gallant foe. In addition to numerical strength, in all commands, from the lowest to the highest, a firm determination must prevail to gain the victory, whatever be the sacrifices necessary to this end. Bear in mind the importance of victory to Russia, and, above all, remember how necessary victory is, the more speedily to relieve our brothers at Port Arthur, who for seven months have heroically maintained the defence of the fortress entrusted to their care.

"Our army, strong in its union with the Tsar and all Russia, performed great deeds of heroism for the Fatherland in all our wars, and gained for itself well-merited renown among all nations. Think at every hour of the defence of Russia's dignity and rights in the Far East, which has been entrusted to you by the wish of the Emperor. Think at every hour that to you the defence of the honour and fame of the whole Russian Army has been confided. The illustrious head of the Russian land, together with the whole of Russia, prays for you and blesses you for your heroic deeds. Strengthened by this prayer, and imbued

with the consciousness of the importance of the task that has fallen to us, we must go forward fearlessly with a firm determination to do our duty to the end, without sparing our lives. The will of God be with us all!"

The wording of this remarkable document gives rise to various reflections. In the first place it may be doubted whether any of the bombastic utterances thus voiced can be fairly ascribed to Kuropatkin himself, and this doubt supports the theory that once again the Commander-in-Chief may have yielded to pressure in attempting to advance against his better judgment. For it is difficult to see wherein such a shrewd observer as Kuropatkin could have imagined his position to have altered so conspicuously for the better during the past four weeks as to justify the belief that he would now crush finally the enemy who literally squeezed him out of Liao-yang.

It has further been questioned whether it is quite in keeping with the character of one who, in most respects, has shown himself a very able and sagacious, if occasionally mistaken, leader of armies, to make such a triumphant parade of his future movements. Since the French shouted "*À Berlin!*" in 1870, it has not been the military fashion to anticipate too freely the hour of victory, and special caution is usually displayed in such directions by generals who have recently suffered unmistakable defeat. While, therefore, something of Kuropatkin's fine spirit, his personal gallantry, and his fiery resolution are reflected in some parts of this exhortation, one feels that other hands and minds may have been at work in causing Kuropatkin thus to pledge himself to an enterprise fraught, as will presently be seen, with sharp calamity.

## CHAPTER LXV.

KUROPATKIN TAKES THE OFFENSIVE—THE SHA-HO BATTLEFIELD—THE FIGHTING FROM DAY TO DAY—A TITANIC CONFLICT—RUSSIANS FORCED TO RETIRE—JAPANESE VICTORIOUS—SOME THRILLING INCIDENTS.

**W**HATEVER may have been the inspired source of Kuropatkin's Order of the Day of October 2nd, he was by no means so prompt as might have been expected in carrying out his published intentions. Not until the 5th does the Russian Army in Manchuria begin to take the offensive, and that day the principal feature seems to have been a great religious service in the field chapel at Mukden, at which special prayers were offered up for the success of the Russian arms. The service on this memorable occasion concluded with a sermon by the Grand Almoner, who, addressing General Kuropatkin, said: "Of old the parting warrior was told, 'Return with your shield or on it,' but to-day I say to you, 'Go with the Cross, and in the Faith of Christ.'" If at times the Russian character exhibits unamiable traits, it will be conceded to the Army of the Tsar that it seems never to have allowed the hardships, the terrors, or the preoccupations of a frightfully exacting campaign to lessen its religious fervour or to neglect the full observance of its Church's elaborate rites and ceremonial.

The task which now lay before Kuropatkin and his legions was not dissimilar from that which faced Oyama before he made his arrangements for the final advance on Liao-yang. Nor does the Russian Commander-in-Chief disdain to employ a very similar form of strategy. In fact, by turning the map upside down,

and then shifting the two flanks, one arrives at a conception of the Russian advance which corresponds quite strangely with the actual trend of the Japanese operations against Liao-yang. In the latter case there was an advance up the railway against the enemy's right, strong pressure on his centre, and an attempt to turn and envelope his right. Roughly speaking, Kuropatkin's plan consists of an advance down the railway against the Japanese left, a vigorous attempt to debate with him the possession of the Yen-tai coal-mines, which constitute, practically speaking, the enemy's centre, and to work round his right flank at Pen-si-hu on the Tai-tse River.

A glance may now be given at the geographical features of the situation. To the west of Liao-yang the Tai-tse-ho has two affluents, one the Hun-ho, which comes down from the north after flowing past Mukden, and the other the Sha-ho, or Sand River, which is crossed by the Imperial Road at Sha-ho-pu, about fourteen miles south by west of Mukden. A little south of Sha-ho-pu, some twenty miles south by west of Mukden, a small affluent of the Sha-ho is also crossed by the Imperial Road. This is the Shi-li-ho, which flows roughly from east to west in a very narrow and deep bed.

A correspondent has given in the *Times* an interesting account of the Sha-ho, which, from a point a few hundred miles west, and for a long distance east of the

road, is in some places 500 yards wide and all sand. The actual river is at this season a mere stream which meanders from side to side of the bed, and is nowhere just now more than 50 or 60 yards wide, and rarely more than 3 feet deep. South of the river there is a long series of sand dunes stretching for some miles eastward of the Imperial Road, and generally crowned with trees. West of the Imperial Road the Sha-ho flows through a narrow and very steep bed, with steep banks. There is much deep water and a treacherous mud bottom. Only the railway bridge exists, and a passage of the stream at this point by a great body of troops would seem to be difficult. Sha-ho-pu was once a small town on the north bank, but was all eaten away during the floods of 1888, and its former site now forms part of the deep, open sandy river bed. To the south of the river, along a gully winding from the south, is the present little village, which consists of only about twenty houses, mostly in yards surmounted by high mud walls.

The first few days of the great and protracted operation which will go down to history as the Battle of the Sha-ho are uninteresting and, as regards details, rather obscure.

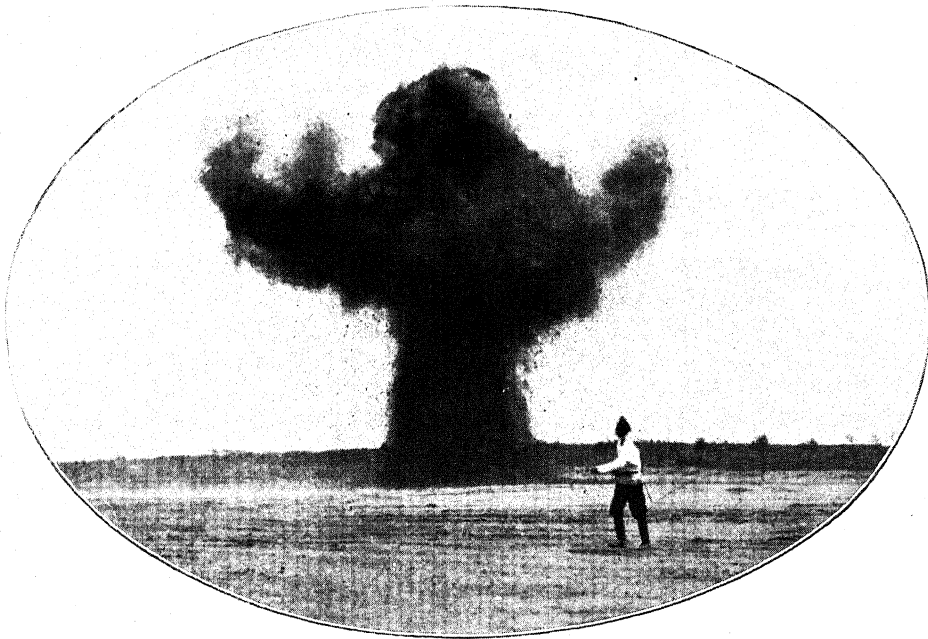
At first, it would seem, the Russians met with some success in the course of their advance, particularly on their right. By the 9th their scheme was beginning to develop, and the actual struggle began. The initial result of importance appears to have been the Russian occupation of Ben-tsia-pu-tse which, as noted in the previous chapter, is an important point on the road from Mukden to Pen-si-hu, formerly held in some strength by the Japanese. The latter had fortified the place pretty strongly, but, it is said, had

neglected to take into account a certain hill from which a galling flank fire could be delivered on the Ben-tsia-pu-tse position. The Russians, it is claimed—and the Japanese do not controvert this account—duly seized this hill, and made such good use of it in connection with their attack that the Japanese evacuated their position without further serious resistance.

Meanwhile, the Russians had been pushing on against both Yen-tai and the Yen-tai coal-mines, and had further worked round first to the east and then southwards, until, on the morning of the 9th, they were able to cross the Tai-tse-ho near Pen-si-hu with a brigade of infantry, 20,000 cavalry, and two guns. Now General Kuroki not only had a detachment at Pen-si-hu, but one or more to the east of this place. Accordingly this Russian movement meant not only a menace to the Japanese right flank; it involved also a complete severance of communications between the main body and the detachments guarding that flank.

October 9th, then, finds the Japanese in a situation demanding high qualities of generalship. As far as the evacuation of Ben-tsia-pu-tse is concerned there is no particular cause for regret, as it merely necessitates a shrinkage of the Japanese resistance, which is now chiefly concentrated in and round the Yen-tai colliery position. But the Russian movements on the Tai-tse-ho need to be strongly checked, lest they be followed up by attacks in force calculated to throw the whole of the Japanese right flank into disorder.

The Japanese rise to the occasion finely. Although there is only a weak detachment near Pen-si-hu, and the Russians under General Rennenkampf are reinforced



RUSSIAN PRACTICE WITH LAND MINES NEAR MUKDEN.

by another brigade of infantry, 1,500 more cavalry, and eight more guns, the attackers soon find they have their work cut out for them. Before their communications have been severed the defenders manage to let General Kuroki know what is happening, and they then set themselves to the business of offering the stoutest possible resistance. Between two and three o'clock in the afternoon the Russian infantry and artillery by a sudden attack seize the heights east of Pen-si-hu, and, later, capture another position commanding the road. The fighting throughout the 9th in this quarter is described as being of the fiercest description, and the Russian losses alone were admitted to be "about 200." That the Russians were very much in earnest in attempting to beat down the Japanese resistance is apparent from the number of troops they showed in this quarter.

For behind the two infantry brigades and the 3,000 odd cavalry who were actually operating on or had crossed the Tai-tse River, there seem to have been large bodies moving down from the direction of the Ta-ling, presumably with the intention of completing the process of rolling up the Japanese right flank when the fighting in the centre had become more developed.

But, notwithstanding their capture of the two positions mentioned, the Russians may well have been taken aback by the furious reception they encountered. By all accounts they might as well have engaged a full division as this small, isolated detachment, judging by the extraordinary tenacity and hitting power displayed by the latter. Nor were Japanese pluck and resolution to go unrewarded. By 9 p.m. on October 9th a reinforcement despatched by General

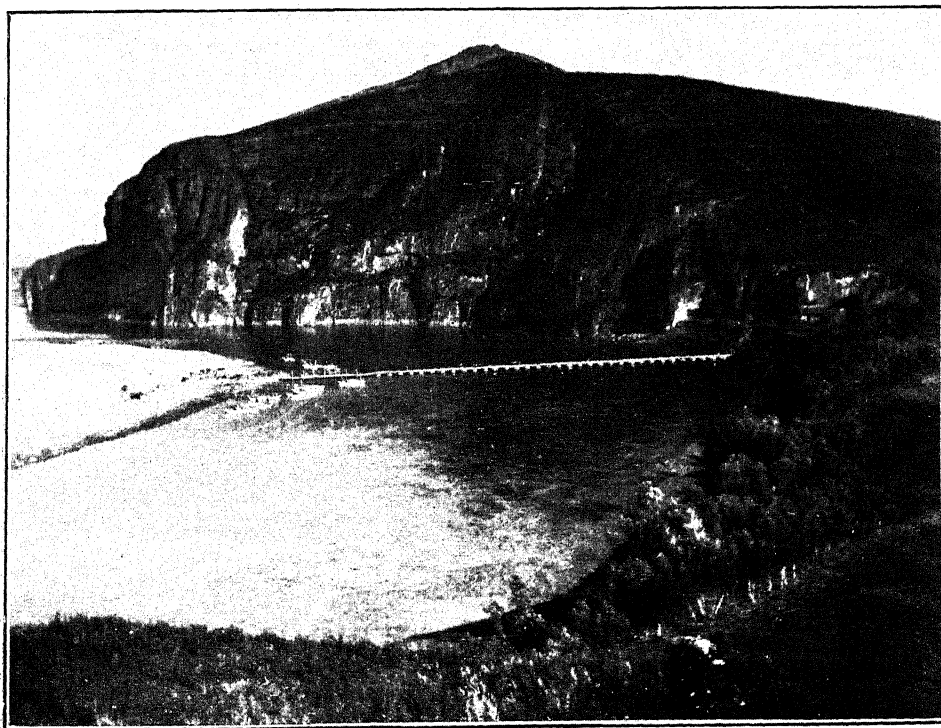


Kuroki had fought its way to the rescue of the hard-pressed detachment, and throughout the night a vigilant watch was kept in order to frustrate a possible attack in the darkness.

We may anticipate events in this a little by mentioning that on the morning of the 10th the Japanese at Pen-si-hu made a brisk counter-attack under cover of a thick fog, and succeeded by 11 a.m. in regaining both of the positions lost on the previous day. Exasperated at this the Russian cavalry swept up in a desperate charge, coming, according to the official despatches, "within sword-length," but they were repulsed, leaving many dead and wounded. Later the Russians were reinforced, but the Japanese continued to hold their ground well,

and there can be little question that the Russian failure to make a serious impression on this flank contributed largely to the eventual result of the battle thus fiercely begun.

The remainder of the fighting on the 9th was not very dramatic, the Russians being still engaged in covering the considerable space between the Hun-ho and the Japanese left and centre. During the morning only one division was observed in the centre, but in the afternoon a large column, five miles long, was seen moving southwards down the railway. According to Russian unofficial accounts one Russian force, which had crossed the Sha-ho on the 9th, was engaged during the day at Ha-ma-tung, which lies to the north of the Yen-tai coal mines about



THE JAPANESE PONTOON BRIDGE OVER THE TAI-TSE RIVER.

twenty miles south-east of Mukden. On the hills round Ha-ma-tung the Japanese had planted four batteries. When the Russians advanced these retired southward across a narrow valley which runs east and west, and joined the main Japanese force on the hills beyond. In the fighting round Ha-ma-tung a few Japanese prisoners are said to have been taken. The Russians followed the Japanese across the valley, taking up positions on the foothills, from which the artillery shelled the Japanese forces while the infantry advanced through the defiles.

On October 10th the principal fighting took place between the branch line from Yen-tai to the coal mines and the Shih-li-ho, the little stream flowing at right angles to the Imperial Road, of which mention was made at the beginning of this chapter. On the previous evening the Russian outposts had advanced to within three or four miles of Yen-tai, and at this point the Japanese evidently intended to check the enemy's progress. Accordingly they brought up strong reserves with artillery, and a vigorous duel takes place, the Japanese not only maintaining their positions, but even assuming the offensive after they had thoroughly searched the Russian positions with a well-directed artillery fire. In the evening the Russians fell back across the Shih-li river in order to bivouac, but on the morning of the 11th they recrossed, and fighting was resumed with the utmost vigour.

In the early morning of the 10th there was sharp fighting far away on the Japanese right, some distance beyond Pen-si-hu, at a place called Han-chang. Here the Japanese had an outlying detachment, more, it would seem, for purposes of observation than with any idea of independent action, and the post had

been attacked by the Russians as far back as October 7th. Apparently the solitary idea in the mind of a Japanese officer attacked under such circumstances is to fight and keep on fighting, and the commander of this detachment is no exception to the rule. He resists on the 7th, and continues to resist throughout the 8th and 9th. We have no details of his performances, but it is duly recorded by Marshal Oyama that at 3 a.m. on the morning of the 10th the Japanese at Han-chang made a night attack on the enemy confronting them, and drove them back eastward.

During the 10th no serious movement is recorded on the Japanese left, but preparations are being made to assume the offensive on the following day.

The 11th is a day of close and bitter fighting all along the line. The Russians at ten o'clock in the morning open a severe attack on the Japanese forces at Pen-si-hu, which have been considerably stiffened, and the battle rages hotly in this quarter until sundown without, it would seem, much advantage being gained on either side, the Russians being in considerable strength, and having now some 80 guns east of Pen-si-hu.

In the Japanese centre rather more marked progress is made. To the north of the Yen-tai coal mines there is very fierce fighting, in the course of which the Japanese begin gradually to assume the offensive, but as yet they do not make much headway in this direction owing to the strength of the enemy, and the alternating fortune of war, which for a time places the greater portion of an important position east of the mines in the hands of the enemy.

It is on the left that the fighting on the 11th assumes its most distinctive aspect. Marshal Oyama, finding that

both his centre and right can hold their own, has determined to reinforce his left considerably with a view to a vigorous counterstroke and an attempt to envelope the Russian right. By way of prelude, General Oku's Army flings itself heavily on the enemy to the north of Yen-tai station, and a terrific encounter ensues, the heights being held alternately by Russians and Japanese. The former had General Daniloff, commanding the 6th Siberian Regiment, wounded. The result of the day's fighting in this quarter also was indecisive, but it was unmistakably favourable to the Japanese, who undoubtedly on this day succeeded in putting a new complexion on the battle. In point of fact, the Russian attack may already have said to have failed, for it has been checked on the left and centre, and on the right is beginning to be rolled back. The Japanese, at the close of the 11th, are threatening the Russian right flank and rear, and it is quite clear that, unless some decided Russian success can be gained at some other point in the line, some twenty-three miles in length, along which the fighting now extends, the effect of this pressure will rapidly become serious.

One correspondent, describing the progress of the battle on the 11th, gives a lurid account of the Vorognetz Regiment of Russian infantry against the flanks of which several squadrons of Japanese cavalry made a desperate charge, "but not a man reached the Russian lines, and not a man returned. The Vorognetz Regiment was again attacked by the Japanese, and this time suffered frightful loss. The opposing forces at this point were within 400 paces of each other, taking cover behind trees."

Marshal Oyama is not slow to take advantage of the more favourable aspect

of affairs presented at nightfall on the 11th. At midnight the Centre Army pushes forward in a night attack, and starts well by capturing a couple of guns and eight ammunition wagons, though at the cost of some casualties, including Major-General Marui wounded and Colonel Yasumura killed. At dawn on October 12th the Centre Army had reached the highlands a little to the east of Yen-tai, and had commenced a vigorous attempt to keep the enemy on the move, eventually capturing 11 guns and 150 prisoners.

Some capital work is now done by the Right Army under General Kuroki, which, with some assistance from the Centre Army, was actively engaged throughout the 12th and made considerable progress. Twelve miles to the east of Yen-tai a Russian force of infantry and artillery was enveloped and fled in great disorder. During the day General Kuroki detached a considerable body of cavalry under Prince Kanin with orders to cut off the retreat of the Russian force operating against Pen-si-hu. The latter had made several fresh attacks, but all had been repulsed, and, in view of the tendency to weakness now being shown by the Russian centre, its position was becoming precarious, and towards evening it began to show signs of retreating.

The 12th was a great day for General Oku's Army on the left. After repulsing a strong force of the enemy, the central column of this army occupied on Wednesday afternoon Liu-san-kia-tzu, five miles north-east of Yen-tai, capturing 16 guns. From this point it pursued the enemy, and succeeded in capturing four more guns. The enemy twice attempted desperate counter-attacks, delivered with a gallantry which evoked the warm admiration of the Japanese, but to no pur-

pose. The tide had definitely turned, the Japanese gave no chances, and the counter-attacks were repulsed with heavy losses.

Nor was the complete tale of the Left Army's achievements on this memorable day yet told. General Oku's right column while pursuing the enemy near Shih-li-ho captured five more guns, making a total of 25 guns taken by the Left Army alone, in addition to the 13 which, with some extra ammunition wagons, had fallen into General Nozu's hands.

At the close of the 12th the situation is becoming clear. Any doubt as to the futility of the great Russian attack may now be considered set at rest, for it is quite hopeless for the Russians to expect to resume the offensive unless the Japanese make some amazing error. The Russian right is beginning to be crumpled up, the Russian centre is giving way, and the left at Pen-si-hu is preparing to retreat. The most that can be done is to get back in fairly good order without allowing the successes gained by General Oku to lead to a Russian rout. Early on the 13th the Japanese force at Pen-si-hu assumed the offensive against the Russian left, which now commenced a gradual retirement. During this operation the Japanese cavalry force under Prince Kanin, which had been despatched by General Kuroki on the previous day in the hope of interrupting the Russian retreat, emerged on the enemy's left flank and rear, shattering his reserves, which, as Marshal Oyama tersely remarks, "greatly improved the situation in this part of the field." The Russians, however, succeeded, eventually, as will be seen, in making good their retreat, the hoped-for isolation of their forces in this quarter being doubtless hindered by General Kuroki's inability to detach suffi-

cient infantry for this purpose from his busily occupied main body.

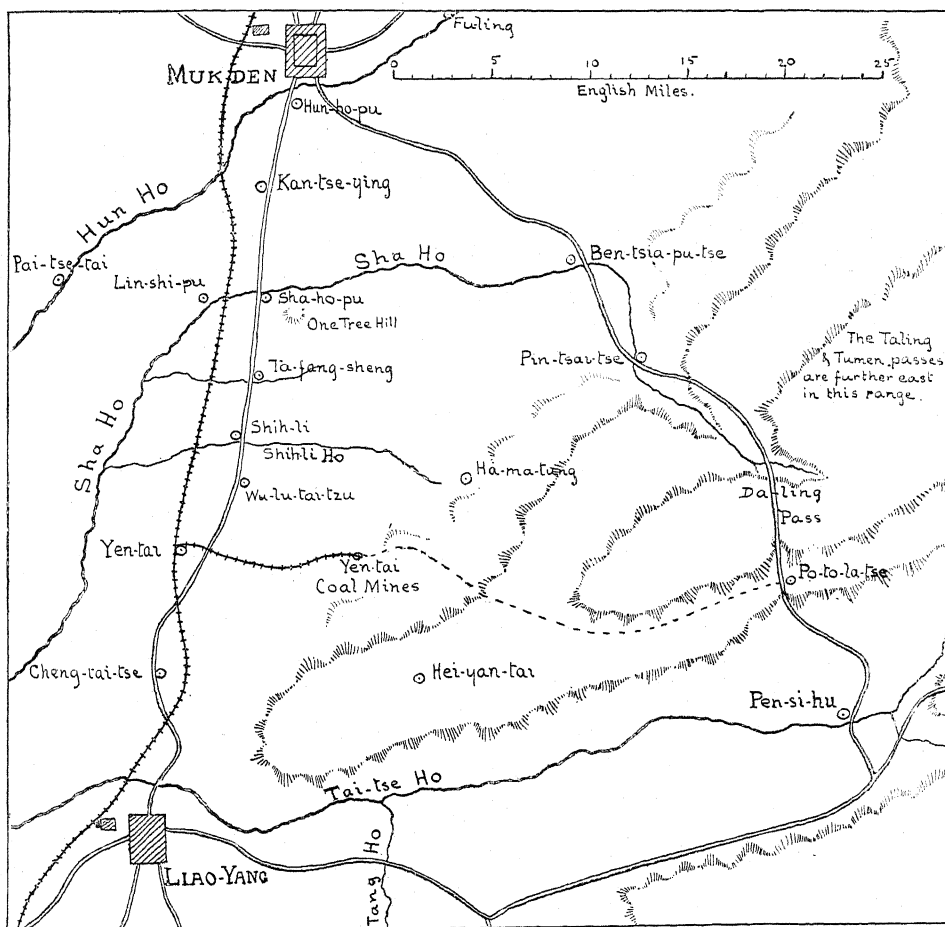
Throughout the 13th Generals Kuroki and Nozu appear to have been engaged in much the same sort of fighting as on the previous day. The Russian centre, although it has now been to all intents and purposes falling back for at least twenty-four hours, has yielded very little ground, and during the morning of the 13th fights with the greatest courage and tenacity, the Tomsk Regiment especially distinguishing itself by the defence of one of the advanced positions. Kuropatkin himself watches the struggle in this quarter, and bears testimony to its desperate character. But not even Russian obstinacy could prevail against Japanese determination. About 2 o'clock in the afternoon the Russian centre finally gives way, and the troops composing it retire closer to the line of the Sha-ho, the Japanese occupying the eminences which the Russians have evacuated.

Some progress is made by the Japanese on the 13th, but not sufficient to warrant any sanguine hopes of a successful envelopment. It is apparently in this quarter that an incident occurs which is typical of the extraordinary severity of the fighting from one end to the other of this vast battlefield. One has to say "apparently," for the name of the locality as recorded in the Reuter's telegram describing the incident cannot be found on any generally accessible map. This fact does not materially lessen, however, the grim interest of the story, which is as follows: The Russians had on the evening, it seems, of the 12th occupied the village in question after a brilliant attack which was pressed home so vigorously that the surviving Japanese in retiring left behind numbers of rifles. Shortly afterwards the Japanese artillery bombarded the vil-

lage so hotly that the Russians were obliged to evacuate it, retiring to some hilly positions in the vicinity. The Japanese now resumed their occupation of the place.

try using cut *kaoliang* as cover. Without awaiting orders from their officers the Russians made a magnificent charge, killing their enemy to the last man.

"On the following morning the Jap-



MAP SHOWING AREA OF THE BATTLES ON THE SHA-HO.

Ordered to retake the village the Russians, among whom were included the Zaraisk Regiment, "approached under cover of night and surprised the Japanese, all of whom were either asleep or eating. Only a handful escaped. Again the Japanese attacked, their infan-

try advanced to the final attack, sweeping the village and heights with artillery, and driving the Russians out with heavy losses. Of some Russian companies but ten or fifteen men came through alive."

Even more stubbornly than the Russian centre did the Russian right dispute the

ground with the advancing Japanese, and would doubtless have gone on disputing but for an order received at nightfall on the 13th from General Kuropatkin to retire on the Sha-ho. Evidently the Japanese pressed hotly on their heels, for towards evening we hear of them commencing to attack Sha-ho-pu and Lin-shi-pu.

The weather during the past day and night had been extremely trying. During the night of the 12th-13th a heavy rain and thunder-storm had burst over the opposing forces, and the rain and thunder continued all through the morning of the 13th.

Early on the 14th the Japanese at Pen-si-hu take up the pursuit of the Russian left and drive the enemy northwards for a considerable distance. Simultaneously the remainder of General Kuroki's Army and the Centre Army under General Nozu press forward in a grand advance, and force the enemy to the Sha-ho and beyond it. By the evening of the 14th there seem to be few, if any, of the troops of the Russian centre on the south bank of the Sha-ho, and the positions occupied by the Right and Centre Japanese Armies are held so strongly that Kuropatkin's hopes of continuing the struggle to some definite purpose seem quite illusory.

On the Japanese left the wretched little village of Sha-ho-pu was the scene of continued encounters. While the right column of General Oku's Army was engaged in capturing some useful heights south to the east, the central column devoted its attention to the heights south of Sha-ho-pu, which it occupied during the afternoon. According to Russian official reports the Japanese succeeded subsequently in getting into Sha-ho-pu, but were eventually ejected by the Russians and driven back for over a mile. At Lin-

shi-pu the Japanese were more successful. Part of the central and part of the left column of the Left Army charged the position here at 4 p.m., and captured it after a severe hand-to-hand fight, in which a Russian regiment and two batteries were driven back.

Meanwhile, the remainder of the left column had crossed the Sha-ho further to the west of the railway, and occupied a position at Chang-liang-pau. This the Russians made desperate attempts to recover, sending against it four regiments of infantry and a battery of artillery, all of whose attacks, however, were repulsed.

During the 14th, again, the fighting was rendered more difficult by torrential rains, a thunderstorm bursting shortly after noon and flooding the roads.

The night of the 14th passed quietly, and on the 15th the Right and Centre Japanese Armies advanced to the banks of the Sha-ho, driving back such forces of the enemy as still remained south of the river. Telegraphing at nightfall on the 15th Marshal Oyama remarked that the enemy were still in some force on the farther bank of the Sha-ho confronting the Japanese Right and Centre Armies, but not in sufficient strength to give battle. During the day the Russians at Sha-ho-pu had maintained a most stubborn resistance, but in the evening even here the Japanese were successful, and, by nightfall on October 15th, the great Battle of the Sha-ho was to all practical intents and purposes a Japanese victory.

We shall deal in a separate chapter with the sequel to the Sha-ho fighting, of which a daily record has been given above, and may there have occasion to discuss some of the more important lessons of this momentous conflict. But before we leave the present stage of the operations there are one or two supple-

mentary notes and incidents that will more conveniently find a place here than at a future period.

It will be remarked by the majority of readers that the Battle of the Sha-ho is one which does not lend itself at all readily to descriptive treatment. The area occupied by the fighting is so enormous, the space of time over which the operation is spread is so considerable, that it is extremely difficult to make any account at once coherent and picturesque. Practically speaking, the Sha-ho fighting is quite a little campaign in itself, and on that basis would afford material for a goodly volume. If we regard it, as in this case it is expedient to do, in the light of a battle, or connected series of battles, incidental to the war, some loss is inevitable. Either one must miss a good deal of colour and effectiveness in the attempt to make the various movements over a huge battlefield fairly clear, or the anxiety to "make pictures" will both blur the detail and spoil the continuity of the narrative.

The compromise here attempted, namely, a brief day-to-day record with an appendix—of which the succeeding chapter will form part—of such details as are available from various sources, is the more excusable since the sources in question are not wholly satisfactory. Eventually, no doubt, there will be notable descriptions forthcoming of the several phases of the battle. But the cabled accounts, apart from the official despatches, were singularly meagre. We had nothing in the case of the Japanese movements, for instance, to compare with the splendid record of the work of General Oku's Army in the Battle of Liao-yang by the Special Correspondent of the *Times*. Nor had we any account of the Russian retirement half so illu-

minating as that which Reuter's Correspondent sent from Liao-yang itself.

To M. Recouly, the Correspondent of the *Paris Temps*, we are indebted for one of the most interesting bits of information received in connection with the Russian advance. M. Recouly accompanied the Russian left or, as he calls it, the Eastern Army, to the movements of which we have only been able to make a brief allusion in our daily record. The "Eastern Army" was "composed of excellent troops, and appeared to have a most important part to play on the Japanese flank—that is to say, it was to make the turning movement that would force the enemy to retreat. It started from Fu-ling and Fu-shun on October 6th, passing through the smaller valleys running from north to south. Its first engagement was on the evening of the 10th, at Liao-chan-tzu. Its object was to capture the Tu-men Pass (Tu-men-tzu-ling) in order to open the way to Pen-si-hu, on the Tai-tse River. On the 11th there was a general attack, in which almost the entire Russian forces were engaged. The Russian left tried to rush an almost perpendicular height and was repulsed. The divisions to the right vigorously and successfully attacked some ridges of secondary importance, and succeeded in getting to the foot of the principal position. This was a steep height of considerable elevation crowned with Japanese redoubts. At daybreak on the 12th six battalions delivered a furious bayonet attack, scaling the heights, but they failed to capture the position. Two Colonels and a Chief of the Staff were killed. The fight continued all day. The Russians climbed higher and higher, and the principal positions would have been taken if it had been possible to bring up the reserves.



Unfortunately, they were required elsewhere to check the Japanese offensive, and to fill a gap between the Eastern and Central Armies. Several companies of Russian soldiers remained two days, without food or drink, crouching between the rocks on one of the steepest sides of the height. Yet the Japanese had but a small force, and the two batteries rarely fired."

M. Recouly subsequently left the Eastern Army, and on the 13th passed westward along the whole of the Russian fighting front. The cannonade at the centre and in the west was terrific. The Western Army fought without intermission for three days and nights. The Japanese had massed their principal forces on that part of the field, where they slowly repulsed the Russians. On the evening of the 13th the Russian right wing had given way, and the Japanese were still advancing. The Russian failure was attributed to the slowness of the Eastern Army, but, says M. Recouly, it was impossible to take the Tu-men Pass as rapidly as was imagined.

Of the episodes of the battlefield none is, perhaps, more strangely moving than the following:—While the battle was at its height a wounded Russian officer and a handful of wounded men reported themselves to the General in command. The General stormed at them, "How dare you leave your men at such a moment? Back with you at once. Where is your regiment?" "Here, sir," replied the officer. "What, is that all?" the General exclaimed with horror. "Yes, sir, that is all."

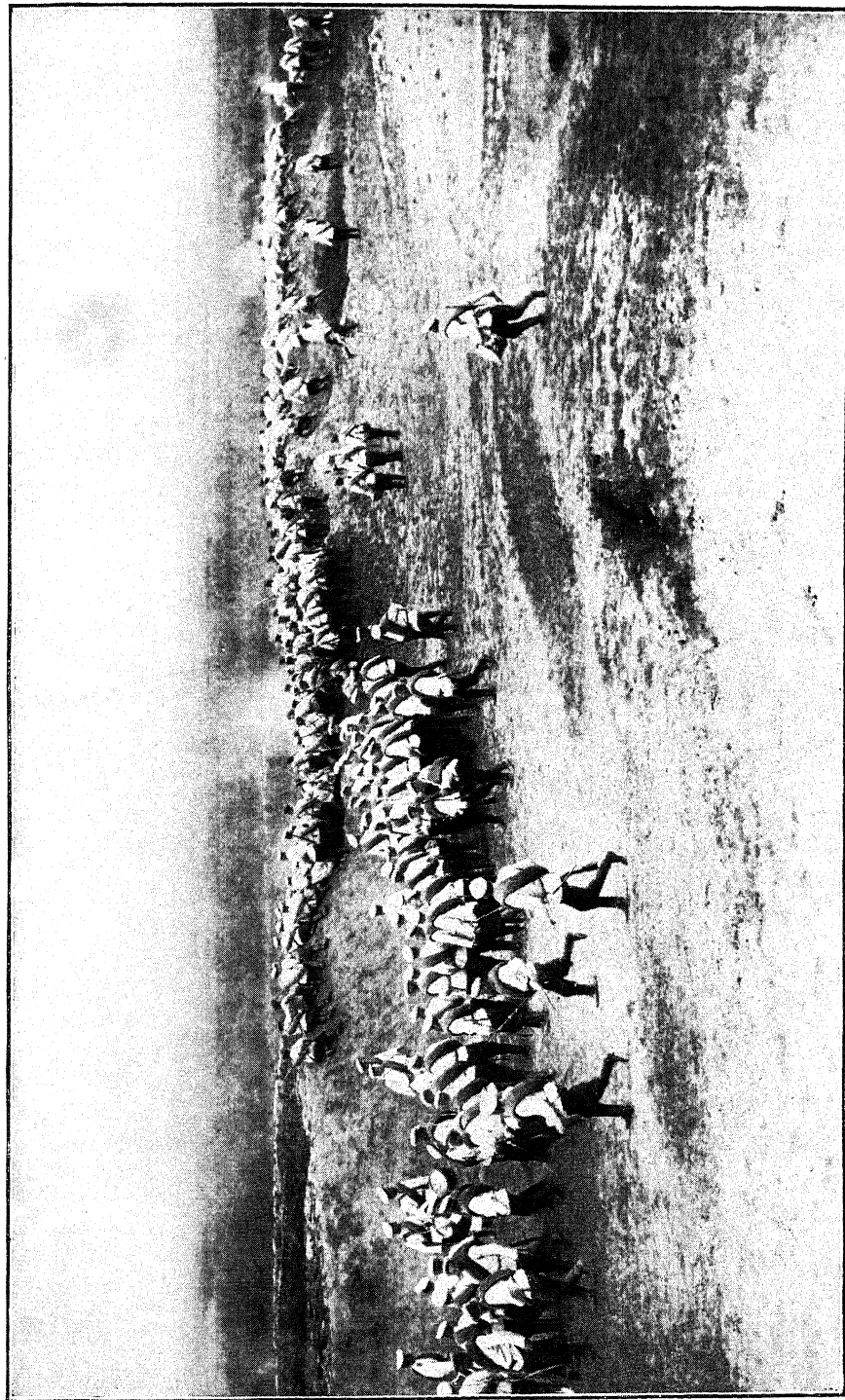
Time after time there occurred terrible encounters marked by almost frantic ferocity. At one point some Russian Grenadiers deliberately threw away their rifles, and with their bayonets in their

teeth climbed some almost perpendicular rocks held by a Japanese company. Both fought savagely hand to hand to the death. Again, Lieutenant Crosdeff, the only surviving officer of a Siberian regiment, arrived in one of the Japanese entrenchments with a few of his men, and the Japanese, having no more cartridges, attacked them with stones, fists, and bayonets.

In another part of the field the Russians stormed a pass which was dominated by two forts erected on an almost perpendicular rocky eminence, and garrisoned by the Japanese. Under a devastating fire the Russians advanced against the rock and climbed up the steep sides, leaving heaps of dead at its base. At last they reached the top, when they were met by the Japanese, who rushed from their trenches and flung hand-grenades at them. Only a mass of frightfully mutilated corpses and dismembered arms and legs reached the bottom of the mountain.

General Kuropatkin himself gave striking proof of cool personal courage. When the Russian centre was in danger of being pierced, and reports arrived that the position was becoming untenable, the Commander-in-Chief mounted his charger and personally, in spite of the entreaties of his staff, led the Petroff Regiment right up to the enemy.

Another inspiring example of personal gallantry was afforded by Colonel Putiloff, who led a magnificent bayonet charge against a prominent eminence formerly known as "One Tree Hill," which appears to lie about two miles south-east of Sha-ho-pu. The fighting was so desperate, and Colonel Putiloff's courageous efforts so successful, that Kuropatkin promptly decorated the gallant officer with the Cross of St. Vladimir, and caused



THE CAMERA AS WAR ARTIST: RUSSIAN TROOPS TAKING POSITION ALONG A HILL-TOP TO REPEL AN ATTACK.

the eminence to be re-named "Putiloff's Hill" on the official maps.

Some terrible accounts of the awful carnage are given by Japanese correspondents. A luridly interesting excerpt from these was cabled from Tokio by the Correspondent of the *Daily Express*, who makes special mention of the incessant hand-to-hand fighting which took place on the 10th and 11th, and "in which hundreds of men were literally hacked to pieces by bayonets and knives. In an attack made by a Japanese column the Russians, after firing volley after volley into the oncoming Japanese, received them with bayonets, and then used their clubbed rifles with the most terrible effect. Dozens of Japanese soldiers were found on the field with their skulls crushed in.

"The surgeons on both sides found it impossible to cope with the never-ceasing stream of wounded. The Japanese Red Cross resources, admirable in every respect, were wholly inadequate for the occasion, so that thousands of wounded men lay on the field for hours, or crawled about in the most pitiful agony, without

being attended to. In this way it is certain that the death-roll has been increased by hundreds of lives.

"The great thunderstorm of Friday (October 14th) added to the intense agonies of the suffering wounded, who had lain all day in the field. The little rivulets that ran down the hills were literally red with the blood of the wounded and dying Russians and Japanese. One of the correspondents, who states that he rode over a part of the field occupied by General Oku's forces, telegraphs that the scene was the most appalling ever witnessed by man. The cries of the wounded soldiers, asking to be taken out of the rain, were heard far above the din of rifle fire. The stolidity of the Japanese soldier and the dumb courage of the Russian were not proof against the terrors of the day. In one place the correspondent came upon a heap of Russian dead piled six deep at a spot where a Finnish regiment had for hours withstood the attacks of the pick of Oku's Army. They had fought to the last man, and their trenches were packed with the dead."



## CHAPTER LXVI.

CONTINUED FIGHTING—LOSS OF JAPANESE GUNS—RESULT OF THE BATTLE—FORCES ENGAGED—FRIGHTFUL CASUALTIES—PATHETIC SCENES—COMPARISON WITH LIAO-YANG—A LESSON.

**A**LTHOUGH, as has been stated in the preceding chapter, the Battle of the Sha-ho ended, to all intents and purposes, on the evening of October 15th, the fighting was more or less continuous for some time after that date. Evidently the idea in the minds of the Japanese was to ascertain by sustained pressure on the Russian front whether it would be possible to push the enemy back not only to the Hun-ho, but beyond Mukden. The Russians, on the other hand, seem at first to have been inspired by a vague hope of counteracting the disastrous failure of the past six days by a fresh offensive. On neither side were such sanguine expectations to be realised. The Russians were to be pressed a little further back, but Mukden was still to remain in their hands. The Japanese were to suffer one smart, if incidental, reverse, but the ground they had won was not to be yielded by them, nor the prospect of recapturing Liao-yang to be brought any closer to the Russians. Both sides were beginning to feel the strain of the long and uninterrupted fighting very severely, and, although such minor combats as are recorded during the subsequent week display almost unabated fury, it is clear that the great battle has, to use the expressive phrase of one correspondent, "worn itself out," at any rate within two or three days of the time-limit—the 15th—

which Marshal Oyama officially puts to it.

During the night of the 15th there was a very sharp encounter on the Japanese left. It will be remembered that the Japanese captured the village of Lin-shi-pu to the west of Sha-ho-pu on the evening of the 14th. The position was an important one, and the Japanese had made the most of it by transforming a large stone temple with thick stone walls into a fort surrounded with ditches, palisades, and barbed wire. On the night of the 15th the Russians attacked the position, and by midnight had occupied most of the village. But the temple-fort proved too hard a nut to crack, although subjected to a nocturnal pounding with artillery. Desultory firing went on for many hours, the opposing forces being only eight hundred paces from one another.

Throughout the 16th the Russians made repeated counter-attacks on the Japanese left, but without any effective result. A village called Li-mun-tun, a little to the east of the railway, fourteen miles south of Mukden, which had been occupied by the Japanese in the evening of the 15th simultaneously with the capture of Sha-ho-pu, went through much the same experience as Lin-shi-pu, and with the same result. Telegraphing on the evening of the 16th, Marshal Oyama mentioned that since the morning the

enemy made no fewer than six counter-attacks against the left column of the Japanese Left Army. All these had been repulsed. "Nevertheless," added the Japanese Commander-in-Chief, "this evening five or six battalions of infantry, with two or three batteries, renewed the attack, which we are now engaged in repelling."

It became desirable to increase the Japanese pressure on the Russian right, and accordingly, on the evening of the 16th, a mixed force under Brigadier-General Yamada, consisting of five and a half battalions and some field and mountain artillery, was despatched to co-operate with part of the Left Army in an attack north of Sha-ho-pu. Coming into line with the troops with whom it was intended to work, this force drove back the enemy, capturing two guns, but subsequently seems to have pushed too far forward. For, when returning to camp on the evening of the 17th it found itself enveloped by eleven and a half battalions of the enemy, who fell upon it with much vigour. A fierce hand-to-hand combat ensued, in which the Japanese centre succeeded in driving back the enemy. The wings were not so fortunate, and were compelled to cut their way out. The most serious loss was that sustained by the artillery, most of the men and horses of which were shot down. Eventually the Japanese were compelled to abandon nine field and five mountain guns.

The remainder of the fighting on the 17th was chiefly in the centre, and consisted largely of artillery fire. On the morning of the 17th the Russians held a position twelve miles south of Mukden on the main road. Just before noon the Japanese found the main road and the village occupied by the Russians, and

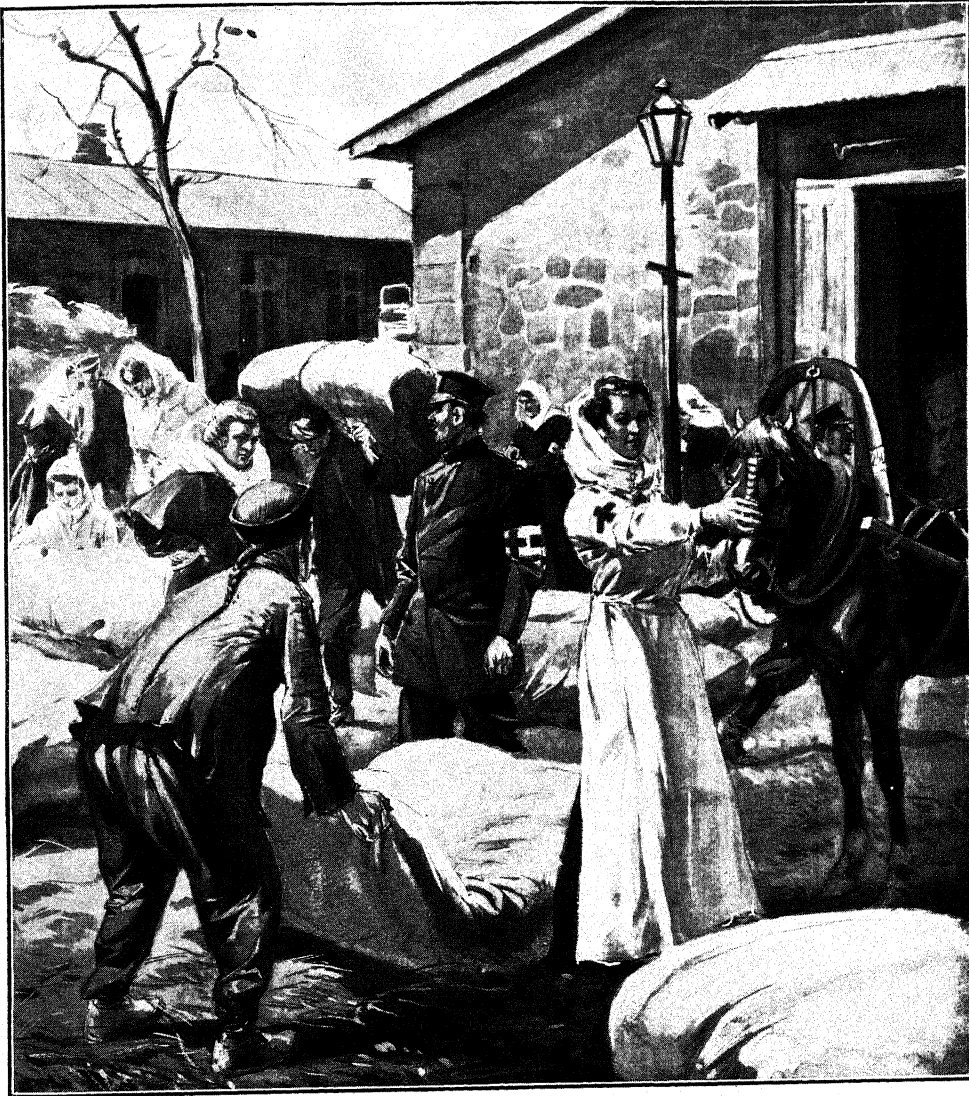
shelled them with shrapnel and Shimose powder contact shells, without, however, doing much damage. Towards evening there was a lull, but in the course of the night the Russians delivered two fierce attacks against the front of the right column of the Japanese Left Army, and also minor attacks in the direction of the Centre and Right Armies. All these the Japanese claim to have repulsed, the enemy retreating and leaving many corpses.

On the 18th the exchange of artillery fire continued, but the day was uneventful save for a mishap to a force of Russian cavalry which, while engaged on a reconnaissance, was enticed into pursuing the enemy and lured into contact with a considerable body of Japanese accompanied by machine and field guns. A patrol commanded by Second Lieutenant Turgenieff met the fire of the machine guns at 200 paces, and all the troopers' horses were either killed or wounded. The gallant subaltern, although hit himself, helped a wounded Cossack scout on to his own horse and got away with him under fire.

At this point we will, for the present, leave the record of the actual fighting with a few explanatory remarks as to the position now occupied by the opposing armies. On the Japanese right and centre it is sufficient to say that the Japanese now hold the left bank of the Sha-ho, but to the westward this definition will not serve. For on their extreme left, that is to the west of the railway, the Japanese hold several important positions on the right bank of the river, notably the temple-fort at Lin-shi-pu. On the other hand, a little to the east of the railway, the Russians hold a small *enclave*, about three miles long, of the left bank, at the point where "One-

Tree" or Putiloff Hill is situated. The Russian centre has recently been reinforced, and there is still a considerable

for the present to make any serious forward movement even if it were not utterly fatigued and greatly shaken by



AFTER THE BATTLE: RUSSIAN RED CROSS NURSES PREPARING FOR THE ARRIVAL OF THE WOUNDED.

Russian force available to the east and north-eastward. It will be seen then, that something like a natural dead-lock has been arrived at, neither side being able

the fightful casualties of the past nine or ten days. Any attempt on the part of the Japanese to weaken their right and centre appreciably, in order to bring

matters to a swift conclusion on their left, would assuredly be followed by a fresh advance of the Russians on the east. On the other hand, it is only by keeping a most vigilant eye on both their flanks that the Russians can prevent the envelopment against which they have hitherto fought with remarkable skill and success.

We may now turn to the discussion of several facts and inferences concerning this truly Titanic struggle. We have previously noted the Russian estimate of the Japanese forces engaged at the commencement, an estimate which there is reason to believe was under rather than over the mark as regards the number, at any rate of the infantry, at Marshal Oyama's disposal. The probability is that the Japanese Commander-in-Chief could reckon on at least 200,000 of that arm, which would bring it on an equality with the Russian infantry as enumerated in the Japanese official estimate. According to the latter the Russian forces engaged at the Battle of the Sha-ho consisted of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Siberian Divisions, the 1st, 10th, and 7th Army Corps, two regiments of Moscow Infantry, eight regiments of the East Siberia Brigades, five batteries of field-mortars, two batteries of mortars, five batteries of horse artillery, five batteries of mountain guns, one battery of siege guns, and one battery of light guns, altogether 276 battalions, 122 batteries, and 173 sotnias, making about 200,000 infantry, 26,000 cavalry, and 950 guns.

An impressive feature of all expert calculations of the forces at work on the Sha-ho is the extraordinary number of guns. According to the Russian estimate of the Japanese artillery the latter had only 638 "pieces," but this is almost

unquestionably wrong, unless it refers only to field-guns of the ordinary type, and does not take into account howitzers and mountain guns. It is difficult to believe that the Japanese could have had less than 800 and the Russians less than 900 guns, and the grand total thus arrived at is one which will appeal strongly to most imaginations. Indeed, it is likely that the artillery duels at several stages of the battle must have surpassed in intensity anything yet recorded in the annals of shot and shell. As evidence of this proposition it may be mentioned that one French correspondent at St. Petersburg, having access to much official information, declares that in eight days of Sha-ho fighting the Russian artillery fired more projectiles than were fired during the whole Russo-Turkish War! Of the Japanese artillery, by the way, the Russians expressed warm admiration, noting especially the quickness and exactitude with which they found the range. The Russians, too, appear to have improved greatly in the matter of accuracy of artillery since the opening of the campaign. The Hon. Maurice Baring accompanied the 2nd Transbaikalian Battery as War Correspondent of the *Morning Post* during the Battle of the Sha-ho, and speaks warmly of its "splendidly accurate" fire during the preliminary shelling of a hill which was captured on the following day and was found to be "covered with dead."

It is, practically speaking, impossible to arrive at any exact statement of the casualties in the Battle of the Sha-ho, because the Russian and Japanese official returns cover periods of varying length. In the case of the Japanese we have an official despatch from Marshal Oyama stating that the total Japanese casualties from the commencement of the Sha-ho



battle up to October 25th were 15,879 officers and men killed and wounded. Probably we shall not be far wrong if we estimate those killed and wounded in the last week of this period at about 3,000 only, which would leave about 13,000 casualties for the period from October 9th to October 18th. The return of killed, wounded, and missing in the latter period, which was issued by the Russian General Staff at St. Petersburg on October 29th, amounted to a much more appalling total, namely, 800 officers and 45,000 men!

Apart from the solemn reflections which are inspired by the bare statement of the results of this awful carnage, it will be seen that the above figures settle once and for all the question as to the reality of the Japanese victory. It has never been suggested in this narrative that casualties of themselves are any sure criterion of success. If they were, the Battle of Nan-shan, for example, would have been a Japanese defeat. But, where one side is attacked deliberately by another side, and not only repels the attack but considerably advances its own positions, captures 45 guns, and, in addition, inflicts losses on the enemy which are to its own as three is to one, it is idle to talk, as the friends of Russia sought to do at one time, of a drawn battle. Surely, then, Marshal Oyama was justified in telegraphing as he did on the 15th: "As a sequel to a fight lasting continuously for five days, we have driven back the superior forces of the enemy at every point, pursuing him and forcing him to the south bank of the Hun. We have inflicted heavy losses, and captured over thirty guns and hundreds of prisoners. We have defeated his plans and converted an offensive operation into a radical failure."

It may be imagined that such ghastly results as those chronicled were attended by some very pitiful scenes, more especially on the Russian side. Touching details of the misery caused by the constant stream of wounded into Mukden were published in the Russian and French papers and transmitted from St. Petersburg and Paris by British correspondents. Here is an extract from the *Daily Express*, in which the state of affairs at Mukden is vividly depicted: "The wounded commenced to arrive at Mukden on October 11th, and the heaviest day was October 16th, when the main road leading to the city was absolutely choked with ambulances, carts and litters.

"So far as possible, preparations had been made by the Red Cross Corps to cope with the inevitably heavy casualty list. When General Kuropatkin began his unfortunate advance, every available ambulance accompanied him, as well as the doctors and nurses who served through the Liao-yang engagement. Still, the facilities were miserably inadequate. A large portion of the much needed hospital supplies were not forwarded to Mukden, the result being that the Red Cross was handicapped in every way.

"Trainloads of wounded were sent direct to Tie-ling, and all who could bear the journey were shipped to Harbin, but there remained thousands of cases which required immediate attention, and these were ordered to Mukden.

"The doctors have been practically without sleep for a week. Several nurses are reported to have actually died of exhaustion, one of them—a Sister of Charity—collapsing while assisting at an operation. The supply of medicines and surgical appliances has run short.

"It is estimated that at least 28,000 wounded men have been treated at Mukden. Scores of them have died before surgical assistance could reach them."

In the formerly fertile and populous district south of Mukden the effect of the terrible casualties in the Sha-ho conflict was heightened by the increasing cold and the devastated aspect of the surrounding country. Here is a pen-sketch from a Paris paper whose correspondent telegraphs from Mukden: "Uninterrupted lines of wounded and dying are extended along the roads, all of which present the same lamentable appearance. At each step there are rags and dressings soaked in blood. Moving parallel to the stream of wounded are all the inhabitants of the country districts, who are fleeing from the battlefields and coming to seek refuge at Mukden. Women and children are carried in vehicles which convey at the same time the few belongings which remain from their past prosperity. On the one hand are soldiers groaning in their death agony, while on the other are little children perishing with cold. All the doors, windows, and other wooden fittings have been taken from the huts, a large number of which have been razed to the ground, all that remains of them being a heap of stones. Mukden is full of fugitives, and thousands of families who have been deprived of all their possessions are living in the streets."

With some relief we turn from such harrowing details to the contemplation of the Battle of the Sha-ho in its purely military and historical aspects. It must be admitted that in neither does this tremendous operation appear, at any rate to the writer, to be as interesting or as significant as the Battle of Liao-yang.

The latter not only bristled with big points of instructiveness as to the capacity of strongly fortified positions to resist infantry attack, and the possibilities of an eminently strategic retreat, but it was real history. It showed the turning-point in the war arrived at by the grouping of the three Japanese armies under the personal control of one man; it also marked the consolidation of all the Russian forces under the direct leadership of Kuropatkin. The battle, accordingly, was the first real trial of strength between the two opposing Commanders-in-Chief, and, if it resulted in the partial triumph of one, it gained for the other a greatly increased respect among those who had formerly questioned his capacity for generalship of the higher sort. While, again, it was to this extent indecisive, it indicated the loss to Russia and the gain to Japan of a place only second to Mukden in point of local prestige, and only second to Tieling as regards strategical significance.

The Battle of the Sha-ho loses by comparison in these respects. The immense number of troops engaged, the enormous area of the battlefield, the desperate character of the fighting, the protracted period over which the operation extended, and lastly the ghastly length of the "butcher's bill," combine to make it remarkable, and, up to a certain point, both interesting and instructive. But it is a veritable nightmare of strategical and tactical futilities, and, with the exception of the casualties, the result is singularly trivial. A fortnight later the opposing forces are in much the same position, and much the same relative strength, as they were before Kuropatkin took off his coat, like Mr. Snodgrass, and intimated that he was "going to begin." At the best, the Battle of the Sha-ho, tremendous as



COSSACK CAVALRY UNDER SHELL FIRE.



it is, separately considered, and packed as it is with sufficient detail to fill, as has already been suggested, a considerable volume, is curiously incidental when its effect on the war comes to be considered. Historically speaking, the period in which it occurs is a mere interval employed by the Russians in making a foolish experiment out of which they emerge with fingers very badly burned, but with no hurts which Doctor Siberian Railway cannot heal. As for strategy and tactics, again, there is very little of these in the Sha-ho battle which is not wholly rudimentary. There is nothing, for instance, to compare with Kuroki's movement across the Tai-tse-ho after the First Army had accomplished its share in the first phase of the Battle of Liao-yang, and certainly nothing half so impressive as Kuropatkin's effort to combine a masterly retreat from Liao-yang with the isolation of Kuroki's forces.

The critics appear to have found the indeterminate and at times rather confused character of the Sha-ho struggle so puzzling, that they have hesitated to

state the nature of the lessons to be derived from it. Perhaps, as expert opinion on the subject comes to be crystallised, it will be found that the one great educational result of the battle is a negative one. Surely there could be no better example than this of the absurdity of attempting decisive results in a single operation with armies so preposterously large, and composed of so many variegated units, that control by one man is utterly hopeless. At one stage of the Sha-ho battle one, if not both, of the Commanders-in-Chief was striving to control the movements of a quarter of a million of men, some detachments of whom had been separated by about forty miles, with only the most meagre means of inter-communication. Even the fine co-ordination of the Japanese armies was partially wrecked, while there were days during which portions of the Russian forces were as much "at a loose end" as if they had been in Kamtchatka. This is not war, and it may be doubted whether from any reasonable standpoint it can even be called "magnificent."



A TYPICAL STATION ON THE TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILWAY IN PEACE TIME.

(From Foster Fraser's "The Real Siberia.")

## CHAPTER LXVII.

RUMOURED RECALL OF ALEXEIEFF—A VICEREGAL ORDER OF THE DAY—DEPARTURE FOR ST. PETERSBURG—UNPLEASANT REFLECTIONS—ARRIVAL IN RUSSIA—DOUBTFUL RECEPTION—INTERVIEWS AND EXPLANATIONS.

ON page 196 of the present volume we left the question of the control of the Russian operations in the Far East in rather an interesting condition of uncertainty. After a good deal of discussion variegated by a quantity of intrigue, the Tsar had confirmed General Kuropatkin in the direction of military affairs at the front, and it was understood that there would shortly be two Russian armies in Manchuria over which Kuropatkin would exercise the authority, hitherto nominally vested in Admiral Alexeieff, of Commander-in-Chief. As will be seen, this arrangement is modified later by preparations for the formation of a Third Russian Army for the Far East; but this is a matter which can be reserved for future consideration. What is proposed as the subject for this chapter is the position of the Viceroy, Admiral Alexeieff, as affected by these remarkable changes, and still more by subsequent rather sensational happenings.

It will be remembered that in Chapter LX. it was remarked that, for some time after the great Council of War at Peterhof, at which it was decided that Kuropatkin should be officially recognised as Commander-in-Chief of the Russian armies in Manchuria, there were many rumours that Admiral Alexeieff would shortly be recalled. Support was subsequently lent to this view by a re-

port that a "travelling chancellery," divided into two departments, diplomatic and civil, had been attached to the Admiral's Field Staff, a provision which naturally seemed to point to an impending journey. But the Viceroy made no sign, and, although it was generally believed that he was no longer considered by the Tsar to possess any military authority, he continued to confer with Kuropatkin, and was by many regarded as the principal composer of Kuropatkin's famous Order of the Day of October 2nd, announcing the Russian movement against Liao-yang. It will be seen later that the Admiral denies the truth of this suggestion with some vehemence, but the allusion to the "treacherous attack" of the Japanese upon the fleet at Port Arthur has such an Alexeieffian ring that it is hard indeed to believe that the Viceroy had not some hand in the production of the unfortunate manifesto in question.

It may, as a matter of history, be recorded that the St. Petersburg Correspondent of the *Echo de Paris* states explicitly that it was known in the capital that the order was "drawn up by the Admiral and forced on the General, who appealed to the Emperor, but was not supported." On the other hand, the correspondent of a Russian paper, the *Novosti Dnia*, who was an eye-witness of the meeting between the Viceroy and the

Commander-in-Chief prior to the Russian advance across the Sha-ho, says that after an interview lasting two hours and a half the Viceroy, in addressing his own Staff, said, "Having examined the plans of the Commander (not Commander-in-Chief, be it noted), I recognise their full significance and correctness." Further, this correspondent maintains that the meeting was of a perfectly friendly character, and was followed by a dinner at which the Staffs of both the high officials concerned were present. The question involved is not, perhaps, one of paramount importance; but it is somewhat unfortunate that Kuropatkin cannot be more definitely relieved from the responsibility of issuing an order the pretentious ineptitude of which is a blot on his reputation, while it would have made very little difference to that of his rival.

There is ground for the belief that during the first three weeks of October the Viceroy was making a pretty strong effort to counteract the influences now being exercised against him; and that, finding success to be hopeless, he endeavoured to arrange that his "letting down" should be as gentle as possible. Such, at any rate, seems to be the explanation of a very remarkable order published by him at Harbin on October 25th, of which the following is the text:—

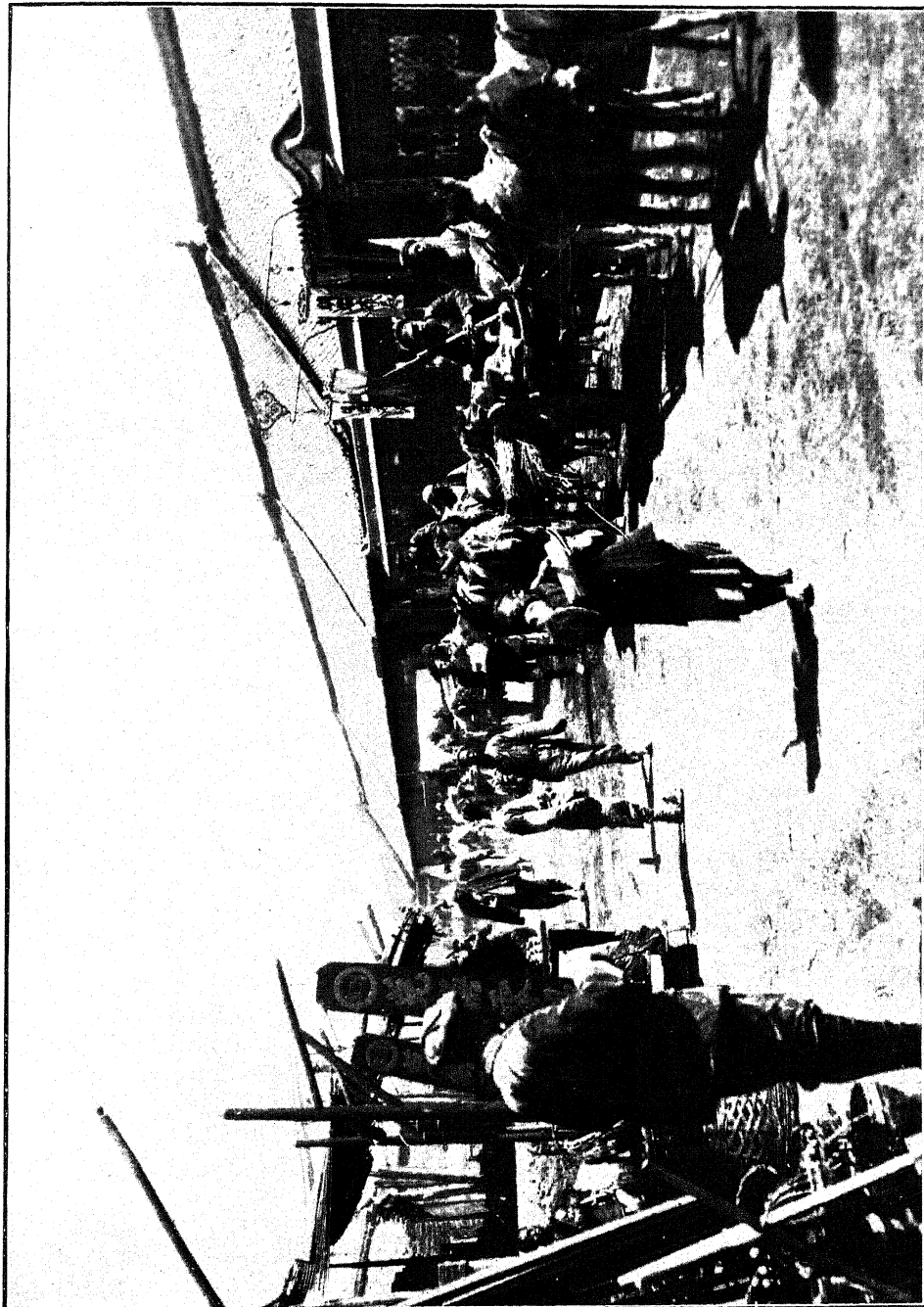
"His Majesty to-day acceded to my request to be relieved of the duties of Commander-in-Chief, and has appointed General Kuropatkin Commander-in-Chief of all our land forces in the Far East, while retaining me in my position of Viceroy. His Majesty at the same time deigned to favour me with an expression of sincere appreciation of my efforts in connection with the formation of the military forces of the Viceroyalty and

their concentration in the war zone, and of my conduct of affairs as Commander-in-Chief of our forces in the Far East.

"While notifying the land and sea forces in the territory of the Far East of the Imperial will, and of the mark of favour graciously conferred by the Monarch, I consider it my duty to convey my cordial thanks to the glorious troops under my command who have taken an immediate share in the military operations for their truly self-sacrificing service, distinguished by many heroic deeds both of men and leaders belonging to all grades. I also express my sincere thanks to the troops which have not yet met the enemy for their energy and indefatigability in a difficult position. I shall always be proud and hold it to be the highest honour that the special confidence of the Monarch conferred on me the command-in-chiefship of the glorious troops which have adorned their banners with fresh glory.

"It is my firm belief that, with God's help, our strong foe will be overthrown by our troops, to the glory of the Emperor and to the welfare of our beloved fatherland."

It is hardly likely that anyone will ever put himself to the trouble of compiling a full biography of the first "Viceroy of the Far East," but, if such a record be forthcoming, surely the above-quoted document will be regarded as one of the crowning achievements of Alexeieff's career. It is practically certain that the wishes of the Tsar as to the assumption by Kuropatkin of the Commander-in-Chiefship were known to the Viceroy early in October, if not before. It is hardly to be doubted that the change was extremely distasteful to Alexeieff, as robbing him of by far the greater part of his dignity. Yet not until the last



*Photo : Nouvelle, Paris.* RUSSIAN FORAGE CARTS PASSING ALONG THE MAIN STREET OF MUKDEN.



week in October does he promulgate the Imperial decree, and then he seeks to convey the idea that it is at his own instance that the Commander-in-Chiefship has been transferred to his great rival!

The full extent of the amazing audacity displayed by Alexeieff at this juncture can be realised when it is added that, when the above order was telegraphed to St. Petersburg, the belief at the office of the General Staff was that Kuropatkin was about to be invested with the supreme direction of the naval as well as of the military forces in the Far East. "It is expected," adds Reuter's Correspondent, telegraphing from the Russian capital, "that Admiral Alexeieff will very shortly arrive at St. Petersburg, and that his stay here will be of a prolonged character." In the melancholy history of fallen favourites one cannot recall an instance in which a former "power in the land," well knowing that his reign was coming to a sudden and inglorious end, has asserted himself more boldly to the very last. Typically Russian is, perhaps, the best verdict on a performance which somehow compels admiration of a sort, even though the virtues displayed be only pluck and tenacity of a rather doubtful order. But that a Russian should try to bluff Russians into accepting him at his own valuation, notwithstanding such clear signs of his depreciated authority, may almost be classed as one of the curiosities of history.

Five days after his publication of the order relating to the Commander-in-Chiefship Admiral Alexeieff and his Staff leave Harbin for St. Petersburg, where they are timed to arrive a fortnight later. It is officially given out that the Viceroy's return is due to the fact that his service is needed in forming new plans for the

campaign in Manchuria; but elsewhere the opinion is freely expressed that the recall is a permanent one, and has been brought about entirely by Alexeieff's failure of late to retain the confidence of his Imperial Master. The old adage, *Le Roi est mort. Vive le Roi!* is exemplified in this instance by the haste with which not only high military officials but civil and municipal bodies tender their congratulations to General Kuropatkin. On all sides, save among the Japanese, there seems a general disposition to regard the Viceroy's return, or recall, with satisfaction. The Japanese can hardly be expected to regard the matter in the same light as their enemies, for they are shrewd enough to have perceived that the conflict of ideas between Alexeieff and Kuropatkin hitherto has been all to their advantage. The prospect of a change from this divided authority, these divided counsels, and the consequent occasional confusion, to a strong, coherent system of naval and military control, can hardly be welcome to an adversary who has scored so heavily by the mistakes of the *régime* now ended.

Personally and individually speaking, no doubt, the Japanese are glad enough to hear that Alexeieff has left Manchuria, never, perhaps, to return. For there can be no question as to the bitterness of feeling inspired by this strange man among all classes of the Island Nation. It cannot, of course, be said that, if Kuropatkin and not Alexeieff had become Viceroy of the Far East after that momentous Council at Port Arthur in 1903 to which allusion was made in Chapter XXX., there would have been no war between Russia and Japan. But it certainly would not have been entered on in the same spirit of insolent confidence on the one hand and aggravated

bitterness on the other. Alexeieff personally seems to have lost no opportunity in those early days of behaving towards the Japanese with overbearing haughtiness, and there is no doubt that in the early stages of the war the Japanese would have given a great deal if, as on one occasion seemed likely to occur, their old enemy had fallen into their hands. Toward Kuropatkin, on the other hand, the attitude of the Japanese has always been one of frank respect, just as it had been in the case of Admiral Makaroff, and is still in that of General Stoessel. Chivalrous fighters themselves, they have nothing but admiration for brave and honourable men like those mentioned. For Alexeieff, the intriguer, the bluffer, the lover of luxurious surroundings, the panic-stricken refugee from Mukden at the first whisper of approaching danger, men like Togo, Oyama, and Kuroki could not be expected to entertain any feelings but those of dislike, suspicion, and contempt.

Let us now accompany the Viceroy for a short time on his return journey to St. Petersburg. We have said that he is accompanied by his Staff, but the statement needs some qualification. For apparently his Chief of the Staff has been left behind to take up an appointment under the new administration. At the commencement of the war Admiral Alexeieff's Chief of the Staff was Major-General Pflug, who seems to have controlled what was known as the Vice-regal Bureau des Opérations. For many weeks all the official news from the front came over the signature of General Pflug, but suddenly this name drops out, and the telegrams to the General Staff at St. Petersburg are sent by General Sakharoff, Chief of the Staff

to Kuropatkin. Meanwhile there have been other changes. Kuropatkin's original Chief of the Staff was Lieutenant-General Gilinski, of whom a portrait was given on page 126 of the first volume of this History. When General Sakharoff became Kuropatkin's Chief Staff Officer, Gilinski appears to have succeeded Pflug as Chief of the Vice-regal Staff. It is he who is now being left behind at the front, where such an able officer should be far more useful than in the *entourage* of the returning Viceroy.

One can hardly envy Alexeieff his reflections as his luxuriously appointed "special" covers the thousands of versts which separate Harbin from St. Petersburg. Little more than a year has elapsed since, as the newly appointed Viceroy of the Far East, he had leapt unexpectedly to perhaps the most coveted position in the whole Russian Empire. In the period that has elapsed history has been made at a fast and furious rate, and even Alexeieff must feel that at no single point in the chronicles of events since and including the first midnight attack at Port Arthur, does his own share of what has happened appear a very heroic one. He who inaugurated his term of office by an ostentatious review of the largest fleet ever collected at one time by a single Power in Far Eastern waters, has seen that fleet reduced to a mere handful of sound ships and a scattered array of sadly damaged cripples. He who thought to overawe Japan by parading at Port Arthur some 70,000 troops, and adding 30,000 to the paper total, has seen the Japanese put almost without an effort some 300,000 men into the field which have time and again proved, man for man, a match for the picked soldiers of the Tsar. He who thought to absorb

Korea as a boa constrictor absorbs a rabbit, has seen Russian influence ousted, and Russian troops unceremoniously ejected, from the Hermit Kingdom, and the latter converted into a Japanese Protectorate. He who counselled first the retention and then the relief of Port Arthur at all costs and risks, has seen tens of thousands of lives sacrificed to these futile ends, and now knows well

Imperial favour. Kuropatkin may have failed twice in his endeavours to meet and defeat the Japanese in a great battle. But he has not lost his prestige as the Viceroy has. Russia trusts him, the Tsar trusts him, to restore the balance, and it is not likely that he will be disturbed in the Chiefship, for, at any rate, a long time to come. All this must be inexpressibly galling to the man but for



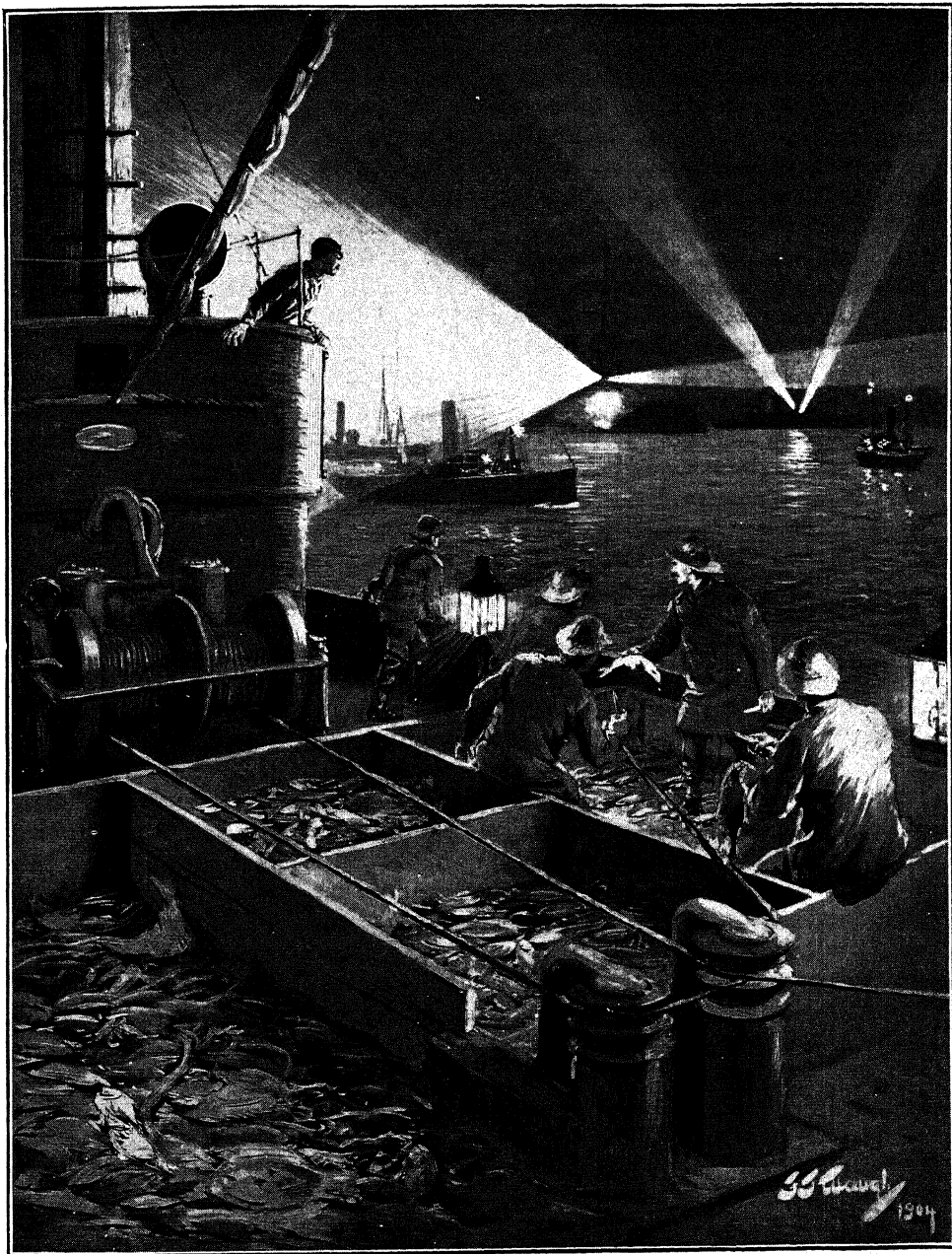
MAJOR-GENERAL PFLUG.

that the condition of affairs in the beleaguered fortress is, humanly speaking, hopeless. And whom does the world at large, and Russia in particular, hold responsible for these nine months of humiliation and disaster?

Surely these thoughts gain added bitterness for Alexeieff from the reflection that he leaves behind him a rival, if not triumphant, at least for the moment on a pedestal of combined popularity and

whose underhand intrigues Kuropatkin would have been the First Viceroy of the Far East.

It has been mentioned that Admiral Alexeieff was timed to arrive at St. Petersburg on November 14th. But, whether owing to the facilities afforded by the new Circum-Baikal connection, or because he was in a hurry to get home for personal or political reasons, the Viceroy actually arrives on the 10th, and



THE RUSSIAN OUTRAGE IN THE NORTH SEA: THE FIRST SHOT.

*The scene on the trawler "Mino," the first vessel to be struck. (See p. 278.)*

is accorded what would seem to be a very mixed reception. The accounts differ rather curiously, and the only safe inference is that, while the official welcome was decorously warm, there was some public disapproval exhibited in the streets. For there can be no sort of doubt that Admiral Alexeieff, far from being a popular hero like Kuropatkin, is now being regarded by all save a small band of loyal friends with something akin to marked hostility. Herein lies the weakness of his present position, a weakness which he certainly does not fully appreciate, but which is clearly beginning to cause him and his party some uneasiness.

For, although he at first declined to allow himself to be interviewed, the Viceroy had hardly been in St. Petersburg a day before he unbosomed himself with singular frankness to representatives of the Paris Press. That he should have done this was naturally attributed to the disagreeable discovery that the Russian public were far more anti-Alexeieff than had been expected, and that vigorous effort would be necessary to convert them to a better frame of mind. The Viceregal defence, though hardly convincing, was so remarkable that some of the points which occur in the interviews granted to the correspondents of the *Petit Parisien* and *Echo de Paris* may usefully be reproduced here.

Categorically the Viceroy declared that there had never been any ill-feeling between Kuropatkin and himself; that he had never proffered any strategic advice or tactical counsel to the "Generalissimo," who bore the full responsibility for all his acts; that he only knew of Kuropatkin's Order of the Day after it had been issued; that he had not ordered the naval sortie of August 10th, which had been decided upon by Admiral

Skrydloff and Vitoft; and, finally, that he had never had any difference with Admiral Skrydloff.

It goes without saying that these "comprehensive but belated denials," as the Paris correspondent of the *Times* neatly labels them, are not generally regarded as very convincing. In particular it may be noted that the Alexeieff who is so anxious to disclaim more particularly the military responsibility for what has occurred, is the same Alexeieff who less than three weeks ago was pluming himself at Harbin on having been Commander-in-Chief of the Russian troops in Manchuria, and announcing that he had been specially thanked by the Tsar for the excellent services he had rendered.

As regards the denial that any ill-feeling had ever existed between himself and Kuropatkin, the Viceroy must surely either have had his tongue in his cheek when he made this statement, or have been serenely oblivious of the countless witnesses who could affirm from personal observation the direct opposite. Latterly, no doubt, Alexeieff has been disposed to be very friendly with the "Generalissimo," but to suggest that he had always worked in harmony with him, and had never forced his views on him with reference to tactical and strategical movements, is in quite ridiculous contradiction of scores of authentic reports from Liao-yang, and entirely at variance, too, with the actual results of well-understood disagreements. Why, too, it may be asked, should the Viceroy be so eager to claim friendly co-operation with Kuropatkin now, when it would have been so much more beneficial to have repudiated three months ago those stories which were the common talk of the troops at the front?

Scarcely more happy was the Viceroy in his assumption of virtuous innocence of the charge of having assisted to bring about the war. He had foreseen the war, had even predicted it, he affirmed, but had not desired it, because he felt it would be a struggle not between two peoples but two races and civilisations. He had something to say of the Yellow Peril, and seemed more concerned for the effects upon other white races in the Far East than for any risk to Russia, who "was protected by geographic conditions." But we need not follow further this herring which the Viceroy would doubtless like to see drawn across the real track.

Of the Japanese, too, the Admiral seems to have discoursed with some fluency. The Japanese, he thought, prepared their plans so carefully that they often overlooked opportunities of striking rapid blows. He declared that at the beginning of the war the Japanese would, if they had displayed a little more audacity and determination, have taken Port Arthur, as the forts had not been finished. In conclusion, he asserted that, while in April the Russians had only 100,000 men in the field, they now had 400,000, thanks to

the efforts of Prince Khilkoff to improve the carrying capacity of the Siberian Railway.

We need hardly waste further comment on this remarkable communication to the Press on the part of a man who, if not yet disgraced, is at any rate abundantly discredited. Apparently his idea is, as the *Times* observes, "that all is well that ends well, and that an eventual Russian victory will secure plenary absolution for his errors." But the tale of the latter is a long and crowded one, and there are some memories over which the sponge is not likely to be passed when the record of Alexeieff's opportunities and his failures comes up, as it must inevitably, for future historical review. For the present we may leave him to his denials, his optimism, his possible future intrigues against the rival with whom he has always been such capital friends. At this stage there seems little to add to the dry remark of one of the two French journalists to whom the above-mentioned interviews were accorded, that "in anticipating a revival of his influence the Viceroy fails to reckon with Russian public opinion, which will have none of him."



ADMIRAL ALEXEIEFF.

## CHAPTER LXVIII.

ON THE DOGGER BANK—BRITISH FISHERMEN AT WORK—SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF BALTIC SQUADRON—RUSSIANS OPEN FIRE—KILLED AND WOUNDED—BRITISH INDIGNATION—ROYAL SYMPATHY—GOVERNMENT TAKES ACTION—NAVAL PREPARATIONS.

IN the early morning of October 22nd—only half an hour or so after mid-night—the trawlers of what is known as the “Gamecock Fleet” of Hull are peacefully fishing on the famous Dogger Bank in the North Sea, about 220 miles east by north of Spurn Head. There are between forty and fifty vessels in the Gamecock Fleet, each a little single screw steamer, of at most about a hundred tons, specially built for the work, and carrying a crew of eight or nine men. The maximum speed of these boats is only some ten knots, but they are very handy and seaworthy craft, as, indeed, they must be to stand the stress of the terrible weather for which the North Sea has a doubtful reputation. These steam trawlers are, as Mr. Walter Wood, who is an authority on North Sea matters, tells us, “the successors of the old fleets of sailing smacks, whose practice was to spend six or eight weeks at sea, run home for a week to refit and re-provision, and return to the fleet which was always present, though constantly changing in its individual parts.” The modern practice is for a number of vessels to be collected in a fleet, which goes out to the Dogger and stays there for a month or six weeks, the catch being gathered from the fishing vessels daily by steam-carriers, which take the fish to Billingsgate, Hull, and other markets.

A trawling fleet at work, especially at

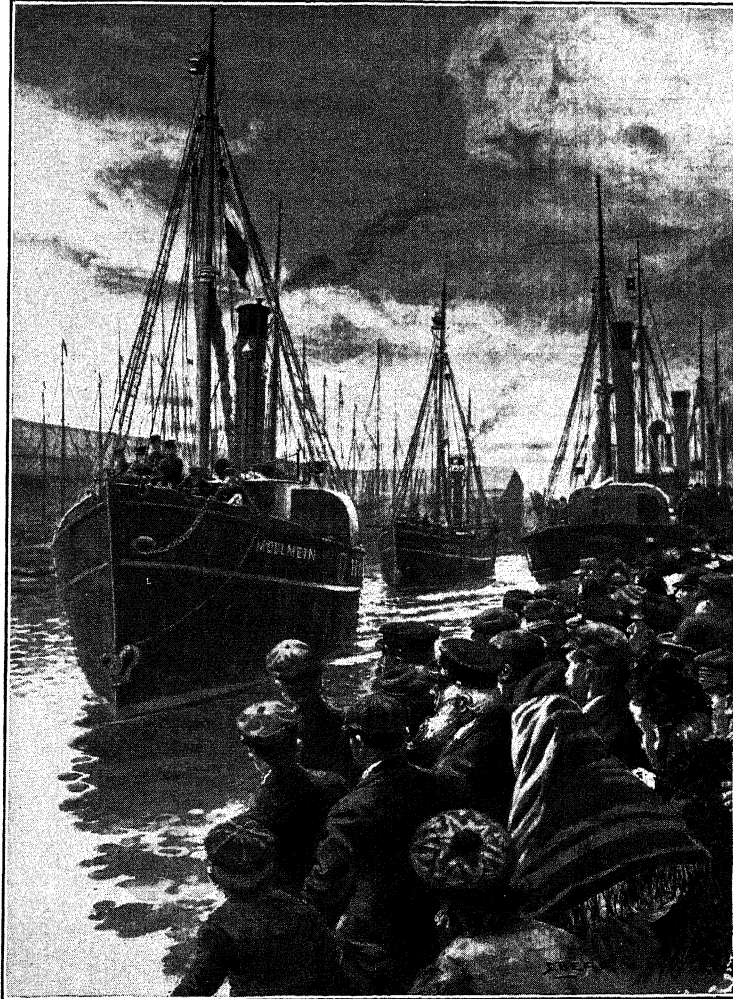
night, is, says Mr. Walter Wood, “a wonderful spectacle. Everything is done in orderly fashion. At the head of the fleet is the ‘admiral,’ a smacksman who is chosen by his fellows to guide and order the movements of the whole. He it is who gives the signal to shoot or haul the trawls. At night this signal would take the form of a rocket. On seeing it, the trawls would be shot—that is, got over-board—a simpler thing nowadays with the almost universal Otter trawl than it was in the days of the sailing smacks with the beam trawl. Most of the crews would be below, resting while the trawl was at work, and getting ready to haul the trawl when the ‘admiral’ gave the signal. At least there would be one man on deck, the man at the wheel, and probably another; but the look-out work on fishing craft is not, as a rule, rigidly conducted.”

In the case with which we are dealing, the “admiral” has duly given the fleet the signal to shoot the trawls, and has also indicated, according to custom, the tack on which the vessels are to sail during the night. The weather is moderate, a little hazy, but, from a North Sea trawler’s point of view, nothing to complain of, and sufficiently clear to render it impossible to mistake the character and occupation of the fishing fleet. The latter is trawling on the starboard tack, and the boats are showing the ordinary lights of a trawler, a red, white, and



green lantern on the foremast, and a white stern light. On board some of the boats men are engaged in gutting fish in anticipation of the steam carrier's visit.

of lights come into view, and presently such of the fishermen as are on deck discern the shapes of five large vessels, which prove on closer inspection to be



THE DAMAGED TRAWLERS *MOULMEIN* AND *MINO* BRINGING BACK THE DEAD AND WOUNDED FISHERMEN TO HULL, OCTOBER 23RD.

The trawlers are spread over an area of some miles. One or two steam-carriers are close at hand, and are filling in the time until morning with a night's fishing.

Suddenly from the north-east a number

men-of-war. Some of the hands on board the little steamers know that the Russian Baltic Fleet has set sail, and, though the fishing grounds on the Dogger Bank would be some thirty miles

out of that fleet's ordinary course, they jump to the right conclusion that these are Russian warships on their way to the Far East. Others of the fishermen believe that what they see is a portion of the British Channel Fleet under Lord Charles Beresford, which has recently been visiting Tynemouth. But the apparition is so sudden as to leave little time for speculation, and in any case there is no need for alarm. Everyone knows of the fishing that goes on in this part of the North Sea, and trawlers are easily recognised by their high bows, from which they run away to a very low counter, this, with the low bulwarks, being necessary for the purpose of boarding the fish. Moreover, there is plenty of light about the fishing fleet, and vessels coming so close as these warships are doing cannot fail to perceive the nature of the peaceful work in which the hands are engaged. The only cause for apprehension is lest some of the big ships should crash into the little ones, and in one or two cases those on board the latter shift their helms in order to give the newcomers a wide berth.

The squadron now sighted appears to consist of five warships, the leading one with her searchlight out, sweeping the sea in front of her from starboard to port. These five vessels steam quietly on to the westward of the fishing fleet, and within one hundred yards of some of the boats. No sooner have they passed when another squadron of warships looms into view, and begins throwing searchlights on the fishing fleet. On board one of the steam-carriers the crew are so dazzled by the blinding glare that they fear they will be run down. "So me and the rest of the crew,"—these are the words of the boat-swain of the steam carrier *Swift*—"held up fish to show what we were, and to

show that we could not get out of the way. I held a big plaice up. My mate, Jim Tozer, deck hand, showed a haddock."

The second squadron does not, like the first, continue on its course, but goes away suddenly to the south-east, thus placing the Gamecock Fleet between it and the first squadron, now about a mile and a half to the south-westward.

Suddenly the still night air is rent with the sound of firing, evidently from the quick-firing guns of the second squadron. The fishermen for the moment imagine that a sham fight has commenced, and look forward with delight to witnessing an interesting spectacle. But to their horror they discover that the firing is not with blank cartridge, but with shot and shell, which pour in like hail upon the poor little steamers, hitting some, and causing the water to fly up all round the others.

The fishermen are, naturally, bewildered. All is confusion and terror. Some of the boats were in the act of hauling their trawl when the firing began. These cut away their nets, get up steam, and hurry away as fast as they can. On board others the surprise is so complete, the shock so awful, that the men's faculties are benumbed, and they seek refuge blindly below, although they are hardly safer there from the shells than on deck, and are much more likely to be drowned if the ship is sunk. There are no braver, more hardy fellows afloat than the North Sea fishermen, but this is work which they cannot understand. Small wonder is it that to be caught thus helpless in a storm of whistling shell produces for a time a paralysed condition of mingled stupor and fear.

The firing lasts, according to some accounts, not more than about ten

minutes, according to others nearly half an hour ; but it is easy to understand how the duration of such an experience might come to be exaggerated. In the period, whatever it is, several of the boats are hit, while the trawler *Crane* receives such injuries that she begins to sink.

On board the *Crane* there has been a terrible scene of bloodshed. The skipper and the third hand are killed, and all the rest are wounded with the exception of

"I turned to assist him, when another shell burst through the *Crane's* side and hit me on the left arm, tearing away the flesh. But in the excitement I did not until ten minutes later realise that I was wounded, although the shell had actually grazed my face and head.

"We believed the *Crane* was being sunk, so the mate shouted 'Out boat.' We found, however, that we could not launch the boat because the winch had

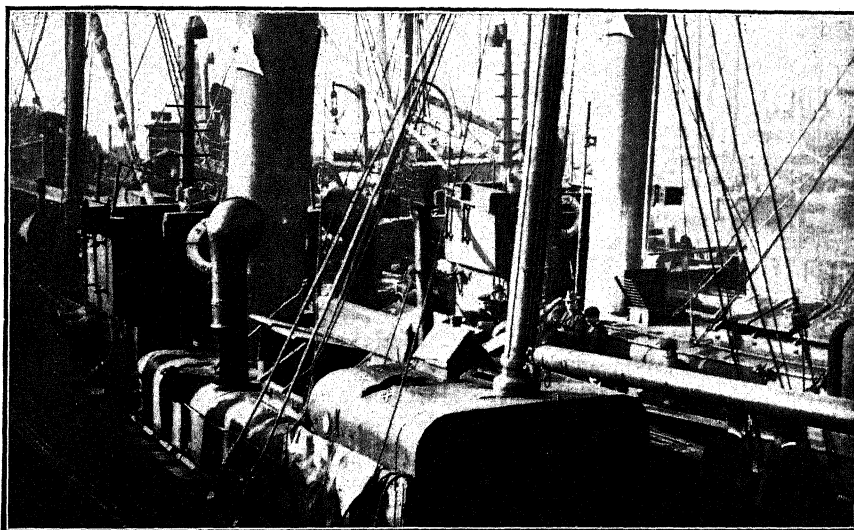


Photo: Gledstone & Bernard, Hull.

A SHOT HOLE IN THE MOULMEIN (MARKED X X).

the cook. Some shocking details afterwards furnished by Albert Almond, trimmer on board the unfortunate trawler, give a painfully realistic idea of what happens:—"I had just turned into my berth when I heard the firing of guns. Going on deck, I saw several ships, which had covered us with their searchlights, and which were all firing at us simultaneously. I ran below again, and was followed by the boatswain, Hoggart, who had nearly reached the bottom of the ladder when he fell backwards crying, 'I am shot. My hands are off.'

been riddled with shot, and would not work. A little later I met the chief engineer, John Nixon. He had been fearfully wounded in the head, and, staring at me, said, 'Who are you?'

"'Why, I am Almond,' I replied. Then he exclaimed, 'My head is off.' The poor fellow seemed almost out of his mind. Then I saw Captain Smith lying against the winch, his shoulders pointing to the port side. I took one glance at him, and I dared not look again. I learnt afterwards that his head had been blown off. The third hand, Leggett,

was found at the bottom of the fore-castle ladder with his face blown away except the chin.

"All this time the battleships were firing at us, and young Smith, the son of the captain, was running about crying out for his father. We feared to tell him that he was dead. Two ships fired at us continuously, one on the port bow and the other on the starboard. I believe that other ships were firing at other trawlers."

The warships having ceased firing, now disappear, steaming away to the south-west. One vessel is descried apparently lingering to see what damage has been done, but, to the eternal discredit of the Russian Navy, no attempt is made to render such assistance to the sinking *Crane* as would have been rendered by the warships of almost any civilised nation in such a case, even had the wretched trawler been a belligerent cruiser. It is left for another trawler, the *Gull*, which has herself been twice hit, to send a boat to the *Crane* in order to take off the two dead bodies and the wounded. By the time the boat has got back to the *Gull*, the *Crane* has sunk.

It is only right to add that, after the first feeling of amazement and alarm to which allusion is made above, has passed away, the fishermen rapidly recover their senses—the prompt help afforded to the crew of the *Crane* is evidence of this—and most of the boats go on trawling as if nothing had happened. It is not surprising that curses loud and deep should have been muttered at the thought of such an unheard-of outrage, and many a grim hope expressed that vengeance would overtake the cowardly brutes who had been content, after wreaking such ghastly mischief on a harmless fishing fleet, to sail away without waiting to see, and in

some degree repair, the consequence of their insane mistake.

On the evening of October 23rd the fishing fleet returns to Hull, headed by the trawler *Moulmein* with her flag flying at half-mast, as is the custom when a fatality has occurred in a fishing fleet. The news that the fleet had been fired on by the Russians flies like wild-fire through the town, and crowds of people flock to the harbour and inspect the riddled boats. The bodies of the skipper and third hand of the *Crane*—both decapitated—are taken ashore, and on all sides there is a hum of indignation, and a chorus of anxious hope that the British Navy will show the Russians that the lives and property of British fisher-folk are not to be jeopardised in this reckless and inhuman fashion.

On the morning of October 24th the newspapers are full of the outrage; narratives by eye witnesses are given at length, and the heart of the nation is stirred to such anger as is rarely shown by the phlegmatic and businesslike British citizen. Of the manner in which this wave of popular feeling spreads itself details will be given presently. But in the meantime the coherence of this narrative will be best served by our turning our attention to the perpetrators of this remarkable outrage, now known without the shadow of a doubt to be the ships of the Baltic Fleet, which, at the close of Chapter LXIII. we left undergoing firing practice and manœuvres at Reval and Libau preparatory to commencing the voyage to the Far East.

At the end of the first week in October the ships of the Baltic Fleet were concentrated at Reval. On the 9th the Tsar arrived there, and, accompanied by the Grand Duke Alexis, who is Grand Admiral of the Russian Navy, and Admirals



*Crane.*

*Gull.*

THE NORTH SEA OUTRAGE: THE TRAWLER CRANE SINKING UNDER THE SHELL FIRE OF THE RUSSIAN BALTIC SQUADRON.  
THE GULL STANDING BY TO RESCUE THE SURVIVORS.

Avellan, Birileff, and Rozhdestvensky, proceeded to inspect the squadron, as to the official title of which a slight alteration appears to have been recently made. There is authority for believing that the original intention was to call it the Third Pacific Squadron, the Port Arthur ships ranking, presumably, as the First, and the Vladivostok cruisers as the Second Squadron. Later, however, possibly in view of the doubtful continuance of the Port Arthur division as a recognisable unit of offence, Admiral Rozhdestvensky's command came to be habitually alluded to as the Second Pacific Squadron, and this distinction will be observed henceforth in the present narrative.

The review of the Second Pacific Squadron by the Tsar appears to have occupied the afternoon of October 9th and the morning of the 10th. On October 11th a telegram from St. Petersburg stated that "the Baltic Fleet, consisting of forty-two ships," had left Reval for Libau, but this formidable number was considerably whittled down by a later telegram to the *Echo de Paris*, in which it was stated that the new fleet comprised in all seven battleships, eight cruisers, nine destroyers, and ten torpedo-boats, several of the last-named being armed so as to be able to serve as auxiliary cruisers.

On October 13th Admiral Wirenius at St. Petersburg made an interesting statement to the correspondent of the *Echo de Paris*. Alluding to the fact that the Second Pacific Squadron had not then left Libau, and accounting for the secrecy of its movements, the Admiral said:--

"The Straits of the Belt and the Sound are particularly favourable for an attack owing to their narrowness, which obliges the fleet to proceed in Indian file. We

know that officers of the Japanese Navy have left Japan for Europe. We have to fear an attack by means of mines thrown along the route of the squadron in the Danish Straits. They would not dare to do that in the English Channel, where there are too many neutral ships, but in the Belt a small craft could throw a mine in front of an armour-clad. . . . We have at least 21,000 miles to cover, by the Cape of Good Hope, to reach Vladivostok. At an average speed of nine knots the journey alone will take more than one hundred days. Add thirty more for repairs, provisioning, and coaling. In my opinion we may be very glad if the squadron arrives in the Far East at the beginning of March."

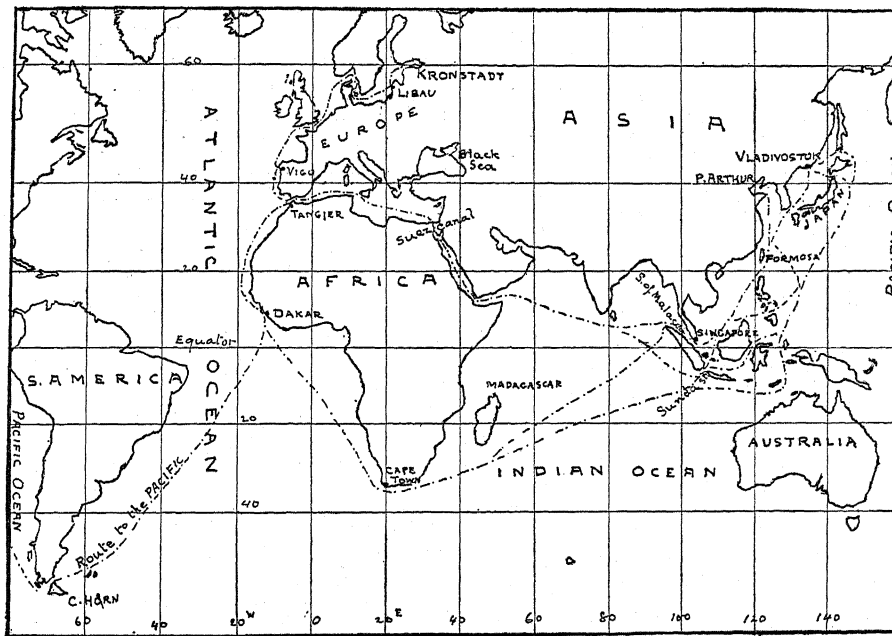
Here we have a repeated indication of those nervous fears, to the existence of which attention was drawn in Chapter LXIII., and the prevalence of which even at St. Petersburg was a poor preparation for such a journey as that which lay before Admiral Rozhdestvensky's Squadron.

The actual start of the fleet appears to have been made about October 15th, and on the 18th we hear of some of the ships anchoring off Langeland, near Farke Bjerg, and taking in coal, while others were passing through the Great Belt. On October 20th the fleet had arrived in the bay south of the Skaw, and on that evening nearly half the ships proceeded to the North Sea, it being expected that the remainder, after landing their Danish pilots, would follow almost immediately. This expectation was evidently realised, the squadron steaming slowly in three divisions until, at midnight on the 21st, two of these came within easy distance of the Dogger Bank, with the dramatic results above described.

Something has already been said as to

the route which it is intended that the squadron shall take, but there is reason to believe that up to the last moment there was dubiety on the subject, even among the Russian naval authorities. For as late as October 20th two different versions of the route were current in Paris, which had, for the most part, been

hesitancy which surrounded the earliest movements of the squadron; but it is not of practical importance, for, whatever may have been the intentions formulated at the time the fleet started from Libau, there seems no question that these had to be considerably modified in consequence of the steps taken by the British Govern-



MAP ILLUSTRATING ALTERNATIVE ROUTES FROM EUROPE TO JAPANESE WATERS; THROUGH THE SUEZ CANAL, ROUND CAPE OF GOOD HOPE, AND THROUGH THE STRAITS OF MAGELLAN.

kept very well informed as to the composition and movements of the squadron by St. Petersburg correspondents. Thus, the readers of the *Matin* were assured that the cruisers would pass through the Suez Canal, while the battleships would go round the Cape of Good Hope. The correspondent of the *Journal*, on the other hand, had heard from the former captain of the ill-fated *Petropavlovsk*, now in St. Petersburg, that the whole fleet would go round the Cape. The discrepancy is interesting, as showing the uncertainty and

ment as a result of the squadron's extraordinary performance in the North Sea.

For it goes without saying that the British Government, well knowing that in such a case it had behind it the whole nation, was prompt to take the necessary diplomatic action. On the evening of October 24th, the day following the return of the fishing fleet to Hull, the following official communication was issued to the English Press:—

“The Foreign Office have been in communication with representatives of the



fishing industry of Hull and Grimsby, and have obtained from them a full statement of the facts connected with the attack made during the night of the 21st instant by the Russian Baltic Fleet upon a part of the Hull trawling fleet.

"Urgent representations based upon this information have been addressed to the Russian Government at St. Petersburg, and it has been explained that the situation is one which, in the opinion of his Majesty's Government, does not admit of delay."

It subsequently transpired that a deputation of fishermen from the Gamecock Fleet had come from Hull by the night mail on October 23rd, and had been taken by the local member of Parliament, Sir Henry Seymour King, to the Foreign Office, where, in Lord Lansdowne's absence, they had an interview with some of the leading officials. Of this meeting a little detail may be recorded. One member of the deputation showed part of a shell which had crashed through the side of his vessel and was found by him on her deck. Another was asked if he, like his comrade, had any tangible evidence of the cannonade. He replied laconically: "What need? There are two headless trunks at Hull. Several men have been struck and some crippled, at least one good trawler has been sent to the bottom, and the facts speak for themselves."

The King was deeply moved when the news of the incident reached him, and he at once caused an intimation to be conveyed to Lord Lansdowne, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that he desired to see him on the subject. Lord Lansdowne, who was at Bowood, came up to town forthwith, and, after learning at the Foreign Office the facts of the case, as presented earlier in the day by the

deputation of Hull fishermen, proceeded to Buckingham Palace, and had an interview with his Majesty. Meanwhile, the Prime Minister, on receipt of intelligence of the outrage, had telegraphed both to the Foreign Office and, significantly as it would seem, to the Admiralty, besides making immediate preparations to return to London.

It was eminently characteristic of our gracious Sovereign that, notwithstanding the preoccupations of the moment, he should hasten both to express his sympathy with the victims of the outrage and to render prompt and practical aid to those to whom the incident meant immediate and substantial pecuniary loss. To the Mayor of Hull the Private Secretary to the King telegraphed as follows on October 24th:—

"The King commands me to say that he has heard with profound sorrow of the unwarrantable action which has been committed against the North Sea fishing fleet, and to ask you to express the deepest sympathy of the Queen and his Majesty with the families who have suffered from this most lamentable occurrence.—Knollys." Later in the day the Mayor received from the King, through Sir Dighton Probyn, a donation of 200 guineas for the victims of the outrage. The next morning came yet another letter from Buckingham Palace, forwarding £100 from the Queen "for distribution amongst those who are disabled, and for the widows and children of the fishermen who have lost their lives in the recent disaster." An expression of kindly sympathy for the sufferers was added, and a report desired of the condition of the men who had been wounded. Although no proof is ever needed of the personal tie which binds the King and Queen to their loving subjects, the strong

and simple manner in which their sentiments were exhibited on this momentous occasion—and particularly, perhaps, the directness of the King's allusion to the "unwarrantable" character of the Russian Fleet's performances—made a singular impression on the public mind, and served to enhance the effect of one of

and full compensation to the sufferers. Further, it had been insisted that an inquiry should be instituted with all despatch, and under conditions which should ensure that appropriate action would be taken upon the result of the investigation. The last demand was taken in this country to mean that those found respon-



ADMIRAL ROZHDESTVENSKY.

the most remarkable instances of British unanimity on record.

By the evening of October 25th the situation created by the outrage was beginning to assume definite shape. It was understood that in the Note despatched by the British Government to St. Petersburg certain definite demands had been put forward, comprising in the first place the apologies due for the outrage,

sible for the outrage would be adequately punished. This Note was duly communicated to the Russian Government by Sir Charles Hardinge, the British Ambassador at St. Petersburg, on October 25th. On the same day Count Lamsdorf, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, called at the British Embassy and requested Sir Charles Hardinge to convey to King Edward and to the British

Government a message from the Tsar, who, while he had received no news from the Admiral in command of the fleet, could only attribute the incident in the North Sea to a very regrettable misunderstanding. The Tsar wished to express his sincere regret to the King and the Government for the sad loss of life that had occurred, and to say that he would take steps to afford complete satisfaction to the sufferers as soon as the circumstances of the case were cleared up.

In passing, it is only fair to Count Lamsdorf to state that he himself had previously expressed his deep concern, and had volunteered an assurance that the fullest satisfaction would be afforded. Unfortunately, it turns out that here, as in the case of the *Malacca* incident, the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs is not in a position to answer for the Russian Admiralty, which, at this critical moment, refuses to communicate the sailing orders given to Admiral Rozhdestvensky, and professes entire inability to reach him with orders or demands for a detailed report of what has happened in his command up to date. Throughout the succeeding negotiations the attitude of the Russian Admiralty is in strange contrast with the far more reasonable and conciliatory tone of the Russian Foreign Office. Its defiant indifference to the frankly expressed opinions even of Continental critics produces, moreover, at more than one stage an uneasy feeling that nothing would please the personages connected with this Department of the Russian Government more than a complete rupture of those friendly relations with Great Britain which Count Lamsdorf has striven so manfully to preserve.

The Continental criticism alluded to is, indeed, frank to the verge of contemptuous ridicule. In France, where there is

naturally every disposition to palliate what has occurred, it is clear that a most disagreeable impression has been created. In Germany and Austria the action of the Baltic Fleet is subjected to the gravest censure, and it is freely suggested that to an attack of nerves, or to intoxication, or to both, can such an extraordinary incident alone be assigned. To take a single and moderate instance of German comment, the *Berliner Tageblatt* permits the naval critic, Count Reventlow, to say in its columns, "The officers commanding these Russian ships must be all the time in an abnormal state of mind, and it is therefore not altogether unjustifiable to ask, as the English are asking, whether a squadron led as this squadron is led, ought to be allowed to sail the seas." Of the Admiral commanding, this same naval critic remarks:—"Rozhdestvensky is known to be an exceedingly nervous gentleman, who gets into a state of boundless excitement over trifles, and it is all the more strange that he should have been entrusted with a post so unsuitable to a person of his character."

But we need not linger to discuss either the Russian Admiralty's demeanour or Continental opinions on the outrage. What is more to the point is the action taken by the British Admiralty in respect of this strange and sudden side issue of the Russo-Japanese War, which has so unfortunately compromised our own relations with one of the belligerents. It should be mentioned that since the *Malacca* incident one important change has taken place in the great Department which controls our sea service. The First Sea Lord of the Admiralty is now Admiral Sir John Fisher, G.C.B., who has recently been Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth, and who had previously had charge of our magnificent Mediterranean

Fleet. Admiral Sir John—far better known as “Jack”—Fisher enjoys the complete confidence and respect of the nation, as well as the warm affection of all ranks of the British Navy. He is essentially a practical, vigorous man of affairs, and he came to the Admiralty, in which he had already made his mark as Second Sea Lord, with an open programme of reform, of which the prominent feature is utter and complete efficiency of ships and officers and men.

Although at such a crisis the handling of our Navy depends largely upon the personality of the senior Naval Lord, provided, of course, that the personality in question is a strong one, as in Admiral “Jack” Fisher’s case, the influence of his Parliamentary superior, the First Lord of the Admiralty, who represents the Department in the Cabinet, means much for good or ill. Here, too, in this time of stress, we are fortunate in having as the “Ruler of the King’s Navee” an extremely able and popular official in the person of the Right Hon. the Earl of Selborne, who, though a comparatively young man of forty-five, has already held his present appointment for nearly four years, and has been a Member of Parliament for nearly twenty. Working always in complete harmony with his

Naval colleagues, and admirably qualified to bring their views forcibly and sensibly before his fellow members of the Cabinet, Lord Selborne is well liked and respected for his own sake, and it is certain that there is no self-assertive greybeard living for whom, at this juncture, the British public would willingly exchange their present First Lord.

It was said above that by the evening of October 25th the situation in regard to the North Sea outrage was becoming clear. Perhaps the best and most striking confirmation of this proposition is to be found in an official communication circulated that evening by the Admiralty to the principal organs of the British Press. It ran, simply and significantly, as follows:—“After the receipt of the news of the tragedy in the North Sea on Monday, the 24th inst.,

preliminary orders for mutual support and co-operation were, as a measure of precaution, issued from the Admiralty to the Mediterranean, Channel, and Home Fleets.”

It is presently seen that at the back of this short and simple announcement lies a demonstration of naval strength and preparedness which may truly be classed as the most impressive which the world has ever yet witnessed. For the purposes of the Jubilee reviews there may



Photo: G. C. Beresford, Brompton Road, S.W.  
ADMIRAL SIR JOHN FISHER.

have been assemblages of ships more numerous, and the actual readiness and efficiency of the British Fleet on those occasions may have been not greatly inferior. It is also an axiom worthy to be held in constant recollection that a British warship at sea is always, practically speaking, on active service. But there is a distinct and decided difference between any sort of peaceful demonstration and one made in such circumstances as those alluded to in the above Admiralty communication.

It is a far cry from the Sea of Japan to the "silver streak" which has sundered Great Britain from the Continent of Europe. There is yet insufficient cause, moreover, why the British nation should be involved in the devastating conflict which for more than eight weary months has been raging in the Far East. But, when the British Navy is told to make ready for possible contingencies, it must do so in no half-hearted fashion, and the realism and thoroughness of the British naval preparations during the next fortnight are but a little less pronounced than if this country had suddenly determined to make common cause with Japan against the latter's adversary. The only difference is that the steps openly taken are purely naval steps, and are, broadly

speaking, confined to the Home, Channel, and Mediterranean Fleets. In the latter, the measures taken are, as regards fighting details, measures identical with those which would be taken in war, though, naturally, the strategy adopted might have been different had the outrage committed by the Baltic Fleet in the North Sea been promptly construed as a hostile act, instead of being charitably accepted as an insane error.

Moreover, as the whole incident of the outrage springs directly out of the Russo-Japanese War, the naval preparations made by Great Britain in consequence are almost as clearly connected with the history of that war as if they took place in Far Eastern waters. A third argument in favour of a detailed account of the demonstration in question might be adduced from the effort subsequently made by Russia to lay the onus of the North Sea calamity upon the Japanese. Although, then, happily the immense naval power of Great Britain did not on this occasion require to be put to absolutely warlike purposes, its exhibition at this critical juncture forms an episode of the war, as well as a magnificent object lesson of the possibilities of naval supremacy backed up by superb organisation and vigorous counsels.

